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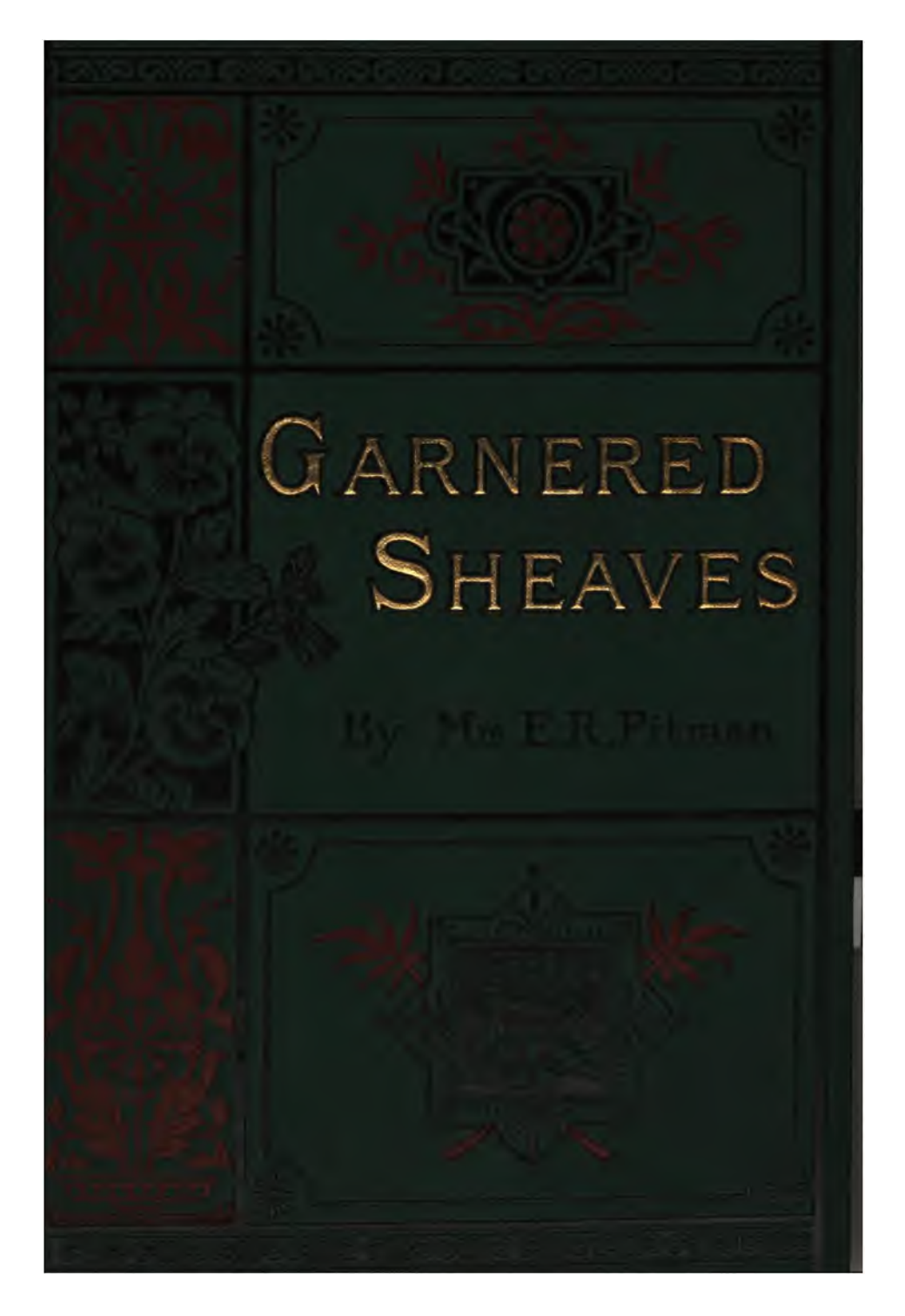
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The book cover is dark green with gold-tooled decorations. It features a central rectangular panel with a decorative border. Inside this panel, the title 'GARNERED SHEAVES' is printed in large, gold, serif capital letters. Below the title, the author's name 'By Mrs E.R. Pitman' is printed in a smaller, gold, serif font. The cover is further embellished with intricate gold-tooled floral and foliate patterns in the corners and along the edges. A small, ornate crest or emblem is visible in the center of the cover, above the title.

GARNERED SHEAVES

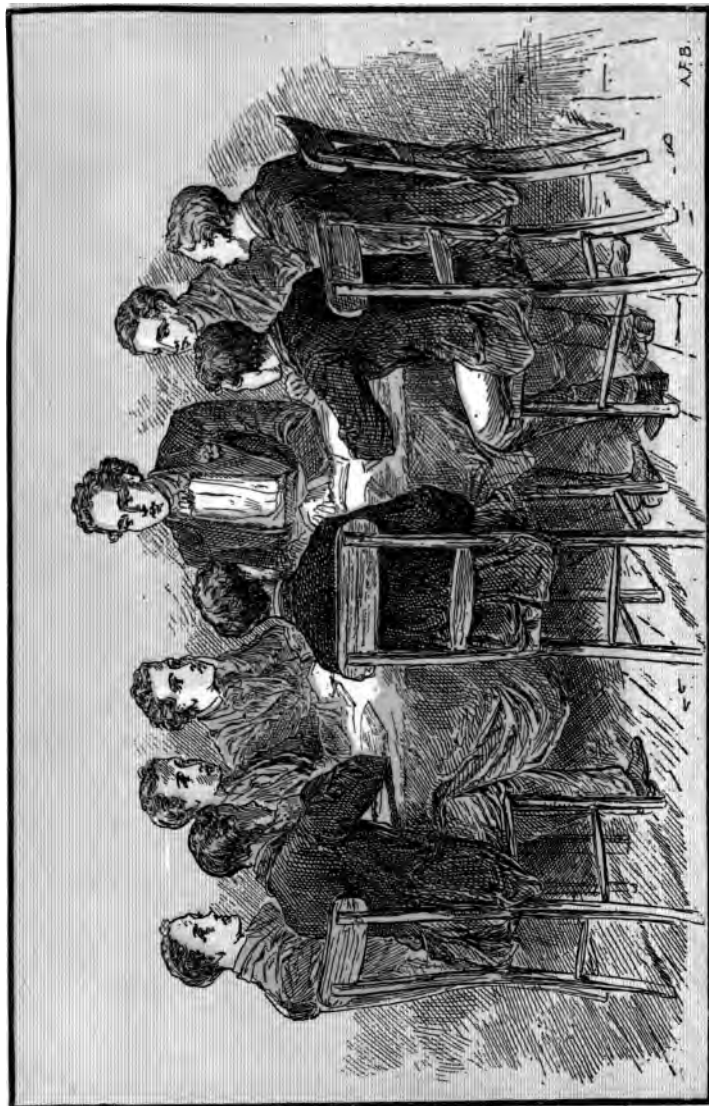
By Mrs E.R. Pitman



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GARNERED SHEAVES.





Frontispiece.

THE SOWING OF THE WORD.

GARNERED SHEAVES.

A TALE FOR BOYS.

BY

MRS. EMMA RAYMOND PITMAN,

AUTHOR OF "MISSION LIFE IN GREECE AND PALESTINE;"
"HEROINES OF THE MISSION FIELD;" "VESTINA'S MARTYRDOM;" "PROFIT AND LOSS;"
"FLORENCE GODFREY'S FAITH;" "MY GOVERNERS LIFE;"
"LIFE'S DAILY MINISTRY;" ETC. ETC.

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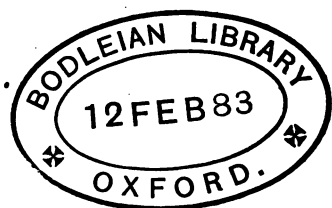
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GARNERED SHEAVES.

A TALE FOR BOYS.

CHAPTER I.

ORMOND LEE.

"If true unto thyself thou wast,
What were the proud one's scorn to thee?
A feather which thou mightest cast
Aside, as lightly as the blast
The light leaf from the tree.

"And with thy passions under ban,
Time, faith, and holy trust in God,
Thou art the peer of any man:
Look up, then, that thy little span
Of life may be well trod."

"You are surely not going out such an afternoon as this, Ormond? You must be crazy! And for such an object, too! Why, how many of your 'lads,' as you call them, do you expect to get there? Not many, I'll be bound. And such low employment too. It is Radicalism with a vengeance."

"How can I help being a Radical in religion, my dear sister, when, according to some men's notions, I am a follower of the greatest Radical the world ever saw? Jesus Christ did something startling, I fancy, when he turned the buyers and sellers out of the temple; and so did his apostles when they went about turning the world 'upside down.'"

"Yes, but you needn't think that you are going to turn the world upside down, because you are teaching the Cate-

chism to half a dozen rough low boys. What are they the better for it either? I expect, if you were to ask them, they would infinitely prefer a little pocket-money, or even a good meal, to any amount of divinity with which you might cram them. And as likely as not they don't remember a word you say after they have left the school-room for an hour."

"As likely as not, sister; you are right there. But still by the constant teaching of divine truth I may make some impression on their minds which shall survive all the wear and tear of life, and succeed, another day, in turning the lives of some of them to the right-about. And in that case, you see, I shall be doing my part in turning the world upside down. My boys are low and rough, I admit, but that is their misfortune, not their fault. The fact only constitutes another claim upon me. Why should I, with my higher opportunities, larger means, and broader education, confine my powers to the narrow limits of self, instead of reaching out a helping hand to those who are less fortunate? I don't cram them with divinity, and I do sometimes give them a little pocket-money. There, now, you have my whole confession on the subject."

"But I can't get rid of the notion that there is a certain lowness about common Sunday-school teaching, which does not become you, Ormond Lee,—you, with your position and expectations. You don't want money, I know, but there is not even fame attached to it. For my part, I cannot but wonder what strange fascination attracts you to it."

"The servant is not above his Master, nor the disciple above his Lord, Alice, and the Master was the friend of publicans and sinners. I grant that the work is not respectable, to many people's thinking, but as respectability is not our aim we are content to leave all such trash to those who value it."

"You were always a queer boy, Ormond, and you are queerer now you are a man. If I didn't know you better I should suspect that your brain was crazed; but knowing you as I do, I simply conclude you to be a very well-meaning fanatic. You would have done capitally as a crusader in Peter the Hermit's mad expedition."

"Fanatic or not, Alice, I would rather have been one of those crusaders, mistaken as they were, than any one who stood by and jeered at them. And although that expedition, according to some notions, was a failure, conceived in the darkness, enthusiasm, and ignorance of the middle ages, it was, as I take it, only the forerunner of other and grander crusades, which we of this enlightened later day engage in against the powers of darkness. That was the shadow of which we have the substance; so that you see, if I am a fanatic, I am one in very good company."

"Nonsense, Ormond, I won't allow it. You ought to cast aside all these whims, and enjoy yourself as any other young men of your station would do. Now, suppose you were to smoke a cigar, and afterwards take Frank and myself out for a nice walk; it would be a deal more becoming than going off to that musty, stifling room, among a lot of low-bred, unwashed specimens of humanity, to talk yourself hoarse."

"Don't, sister; you can't imagine how you pain me. You and I shall never, I fear, see eye to eye in this matter. And I cannot stay to argue now, for my time is almost gone; I must be off. I shall be back again in two hours though. Good-bye; good-bye, Frankie." And Ormond was gone.

This conversation took place several years ago in the drawing-room of a wealthy Liverpool home on a certain Sunday afternoon. Ormond Lee was the son of a merchant

of good standing in Liverpool. Everything which money could purchase, or prosperity command, was at his service; hence it was rather a wonder, in the eyes of some, that he should prefer to spend his Sabbath afternoons in the work of Sunday-school teaching. And it was all the more a wonder because nobody else at home was like-minded. Alone Ormond prepared his lessons, alone he practised the necessary self-denial, and alone he trod the well-frequented way to the familiar school-room. Still, his father and mother never opposed his engaging in his work; rather by their silence they gave a tacit consent. The only one of the family who ever gave him any opposition was his married sister Alice, who, when on a temporary visit to her home, as she was now, never failed to banter him and "tease him out of his seriousness," as she called it. Mrs. Huntingdon was a thorough-going woman of the world; her husband occupied a fashionable place in society, and she followed suit; while between them they endeavoured to fill their only child's mind with the most outrageous notions of his own dignity and gentility. Ormond had other brothers and sisters, but most of them were at school, and they, all of them, looked upon Sunday-school teaching as one of "Ormond's crotchets." "It was just like him," they said. "Ormond was always so odd." But odd as it might have been, neither satire nor teasing succeeded in winning him away from the work which had become so dear to him.

Although Ormond Lee was irreproachable in conduct and principle, yet it is somewhat surprising that on the whole he was not very highly commended among his friends. Although, as I said, Mr. and Mrs. Lee refrained from fault-finding in relation to his Sunday-school engagements, yet they openly disagreed with his habits in other particulars; and in this they only echoed the sayings of scores of other

people. In his parents' eyes Ormond was wanting in "spirit" and "manliness," while other people openly dubbed him "slow," "crazed," and a "muff," whatever that particular term may mean. In short, had he been able to enjoy a game of billiards, or at the card-table, with other young men of his class, instead of "moping at those Sunday-school lessons," he would have been much more popular with both relatives and friends. But being voted "slow" and a "bore," he received the cold shoulder on more occasions than were at all pleasant.

You must not imagine that Ormond was altogether indifferent to this. I do not think that men or women can be quite indifferent to the influence of such disturbing elements as satire, scorn, and lack of appreciation, or that they can always float, as it were, in an atmosphere of lofty rectitude, condemning the opinions of their fellows. Anybody must be more than mortal to do this; and Ormond Lee was very mortal and very susceptible on these points. Many and many a time he had spent hours of self-communing, feeling the sting and the bitterness of this contempt, and questioning within himself whether or not he should persevere in the way he had commenced. Often he hesitated, oftener still faltered—it was not in human nature to do otherwise; but as often as he had done either, some word of the Master's or some remembrance connected with his work encouraged him to continue "steadfast, immovable in the work of the Lord." And so it happened that the conversation recorded above lost its power to move him aside, simply because he had confronted the difficulty many times before, and with each encounter had gained in moral strength and steadfastness. It was not the first nor the second time that he and Mrs. Huntingdon had gone over the same objections—always, however, with the same

results; and to-day Ormond Lee stood his ground ten times more firmly than he did five years before, when he first espoused this new work—or rather, I should say, entered into the truer, diviner life which he now led.

Thus much by way of introduction. From the talk between brother and sister doubtless our readers have gained the idea that Mrs. Huntingdon was a votary of fashion and fashionable ease. So she was. Money and position were the chief blessings in life in her eyes, and having a goodly heritage of both, she, like the Scripture fool, took her ease, ate, drank, and was merry. Her boy Frank was a bright little fellow of about six years old, almost spoiled, though not quite, and full of quaint ideas and strange questions. He was just such a son as most mothers would have trained with a high and noble yearning to bring out all his good qualities. But not so Mrs. Huntingdon. So that Frankie was fashionably attired and outwardly well spoken, she was well content; for beyond indulging him in the gratification of every wish, she knew nothing more of his ways or doings, all training being delegated to the maid who had charge of his wardrobe. That he should be a “gentleman,” was the *ne plus ultra* of her wishes; but then, as it often happens, this gentlemanhood only concerned the outer man. That true culture which belongs to the purest and gentlest lives, was altogether ignored in Mrs. Huntingdon’s idea of education.

CHAPTER II.

THE LESSON.

" This is the field, the world below,
In which the sower came to sow.
Jesus the wheat, Satan the tares,—
For so the Word of God declares.

" To love my sins, a saint to appear,
To grow with wheat, and be a tare,
May serve me while on earth below,
Where tares and wheat together grow.

" Is every man a wheat or tare?
Then for the harvest, oh, prepare;
For soon the reaping-time will come,
And angels shout the harvest-home."

AS Ormond Lee stepped into the midst of his class he felt much more than compensated for the self-denial and steadfastness which he had practised, for there were eight bright faces lifted up to his, and eight pairs of eyes seeking in his own some new spark of intelligence. Those boys were pretty nearly always on the *qui vive* for something new; no old hackneyed platitudes would serve for them, but sound sterling information, and practical teaching. One thing which accounted for this was the fact that they had all received a good elementary education at various day-schools, not leaving them in order to be apprenticed to trades until quite fourteen or older; and beside this, one of the number, Harry Gilfillan, was a pupil-teacher, and a clever one too, looking forward to scholastic work as his profession. And as they were all able to put awkward questions sometimes to their teacher—very awkward occasionally, even to him, seeing that they required instant answers—and the lads, with the perversity which boys sometimes show, took a keen pleasure

in this kind of thing—Ormond Lee had enough to do to keep ahead of them. But he did keep ahead, and herein lay the secret of his power. Many other teachers, both male and female, have lost the interest of their classes simply because of their inability to keep ahead or even abreast of their scholars; for in these days of public schools, evening classes, lectures, and periodicals, their scholars have grown in knowledge while they have retrograded, and so their teaching has been a failure. It must always be so if the teacher is not higher in culture than the taught. We cannot look up with becoming respect to those teachers who know less than ourselves.

But in order to proceed with my story, I cannot do better than give you a brief introduction first to each member of Ormond's class, taking them *seriatim*, as they stood upon the class-register.

First, then, there was Harry Gilfillan, a sharp, quick lad of about fifteen, well-informed even beyond his age. This might partly be accounted for by the fact that his master, who was a strict disciplinarian and held a high-class certificate, educated Harry according to his own notions of capability, which notions ranged far above those required by any "code." Should any knotty question arise respecting the geography or history of the lesson under consideration it was generally referred to Harry, who took no small amount of professional pride in solving it.

Next was George Smyth, nicknamed "The Tortoise" by his fellows—a good-natured, but clumsy, slow-thinking lad. He never had an answer ready at his finger ends, but with time and patience would generally come out right in the end.

Then came Ernest Osborne, a touchy, nervous sort of boy. If you looked at him steadily for a minute or two, you would

be pretty certain to see some awkward contortion or other, induced solely by his nervousness. He could never answer you without standing on one leg, or twirling his hat round, or playing with his buttons, yet he was original and intelligent, and a most voracious reader. No matter what fell in his way—anything from the *Arabian Nights* or *Robinson Crusoe*, to *Bunyan's Holy War*, was greedily devoured and digested.

The next on the register was Edward Telford, very delicate and small of his age. He was quiet and thoughtful, as well as sensitive to an extreme, and generally occupied the post of listener and onlooker in the class.

Herbert Wilson came next—a cunning, mischievous, trick-playing boy. He was the practical joker of the company. Many and many a time he had pinned the coat sleeves of two of his classmates together, or deftly eased some half-dozen of their handkerchiefs, only to stuff the pockets of the seventh with his accumulated treasures.

Then came Charlie Hobbs, otherwise “Orator,” so nicknamed because of his aptitude for reciting pieces and delivering extempore speeches. He had what is called in some country districts “the gift of the gab,” and having it, was in no small degree vain of it.

A lad with the true soldier's spirit in him came next—Hugh Blake. His uncle was a soldier, and his grandfather had served under Wellington at Waterloo, so that the boy had imbibed a martial spirit in his infancy. He was a courageous, daring lad, ever ready for a frolic, and careless of everything.

Last on the list came John Taylor—a bit of a miser in his way; a cautious, reserved, money-seeking boy. His father allowed him a weekly percentage on the business done at home, although John's share in it was principally errand work. It was a good way to induct him into business

habits, but it developed the grasping, money-getting, sordid tendency in young Taylor so much, that all his nobler qualities were in danger of being buried underneath.

Here was the material on which Ormond had to work. Some of his happiest hours were spent in the midst of these boys, and in order that this should be so, he found it necessary to prepare most conscientiously with the thought of each lad's peculiarities present to his mind. This afternoon the subjects of the lesson were the different classes of hearers who listen to the Word, and the harvest at the end of the world, when the angels are the reapers, and mankind the sheaves.

Ormond Lee felt that he must say what he said in a manner suitable to the lads, as well as in words likely to live in their memories and consciences in coming years, for it was of solemn things that he had to speak.

After the preliminary exercises were over he proceeded to the special work of the hour.

"Good afternoon, boys," he said; "are lessons all ready?"

"Yes, teacher," replied several of them, while Herbert Wilson secreted a piece of twine with which he had been executing some sleight-of-hand tricks; and Charlie Hobbs produced his Scripture exercise with that confidence which is only born of readiness and aptness of memory. Meanwhile Harry Gilfillan and Edward Telford had crept up closer to their teacher with a familiar sort of air which showed that they were no small friends with him.

Lessons over, and exercises recited, Ormond advanced to the subject in hand. The chapter for reading was the thirteenth of Matthew. The lads read it through, as was their wont, answering and asking questions, in which exercise Ernest Osborne was most prominent. Indeed it was as much as Ormond could do to keep pace with his inquisitiveness.

"Just you be quiet, Osborne," put in Hugh Blake, "and let a fellow speak sometimes. You're not to have all the talk to yourself. What do you mean, teacher, by the seed being choked with thorns? My grandfather says that he was a thorny-ground hearer when he was in the wars. He was telling me the other day that he was almost frightened into being a Christian when he saw so many of his gallant comrades lying dead on the field at Waterloo. He made up his mind to prepare for death; but what with his sentry duty, forced marches, and one thing and another, it all went out of his mind again. Now do you call that choking the seed with thorns?"

"Certainly I do, Hugh. The cares of your grandfather's profession, and the never-ceasing duties which belong to a soldier's life in time of war, were like thorns to his soul."

"And I want to know, please, what a wayside hearer is?" put in Herbert Wilson.

"A wayside hearer, Herbert, is one who listens attentively in school and sermon time, and carries the truth in his head, but not in his heart. So when he gets outside, on his way home, some evil companion, or some wicked sport, or some evil suggestion of Satan puts to flight all that he has listened to, and his memory is just as empty as before."

"That's your picture," whispered Harry Gilfillan to Herbert. "Teacher's taking mental portraits this afternoon."

"Then if I am taking portraits, Harry," said Ormond, who could not repress a smile as he overheard the lad's comment, "I must in fairness take yours also. Are you not oftentimes a wayside hearer? But one who with joy and devoutness receives the word, trying to the best of his poor abilities to carry it out in his daily life, is one who receives it into good ground." And here his eyes caught those of Edward Telford, the invalid of the class, who was

listening with that concentrated earnestness and gravity which was so characteristic of him. Ormond indulged great hope concerning this lad.

"There are not many stony-ground hearers nowadays, I should think, teacher," put in Charlie Hobbs. "You know people are not burned now for reading the Bible."

"No, my lad, but there is another kind of persecution very rife at the present day, which is very powerful to keep people from clinging to the gospel. If you know any such—any who have been laughed out of getting and keeping religion—you may be sure that you know a stony-ground hearer."

Charlie Hobbs blushed and looked down, for he remembered that when he first entered the printing-office where he worked, he revered holy things, and shuddered to pronounce an oath. But constant companionship with evil, and the sneers of the evil-disposed at his "qualms," had made him as daring in the laugh at sacred things as any of his workfellows. Ormond remembered it too, and spoke such words as his judgment told him were *apropos* to Charlie's circumstances.

"But let me urge you, boys," Ormond went on to say, "to get out of the ranks of wayside hearers, stony-ground hearers, and thorny-ground hearers, and into the number of good-ground hearers. You may be sure that if you do not retain the good seed of the kingdom in your minds you will not keep them empty, for the devil will take good care to prevent that. Wherever there is not wheat there are tares and weeds. By tares and weeds I mean sins and follies, and I am certain that if you look into your hearts you will find plenty of them. If they are not rooted out you can never receive the Word, for there will be no room; or if you do receive it for a little, these tares will

choke it, and so it will not thrive. At the great harvest, which is at the end of the world, those who have received the good seed into good ground will be called the children of the kingdom, and will be safely gathered home into the heavenly garner by the angel-reapers. But those who have not received the good seed will be gathered together to be burned as those who 'do iniquity.' My lads, there will be no escape from this 'harvest.' You are either belonging to the wheat or the tares; and the decision of that day will be founded on the story of your lives. God grant that you may all receive the seed into good ground, be numbered among the wheat, and finally be gathered into the heavenly kingdom as '*Garnered Sheaves!*' "

More than one or two of the lads went to their homes that afternoon with sober minds and serious thoughts, pondering over the truths which had that day fallen from their teacher's lips. And as for him, when he met Mrs. Huntingdon again he felt that he had gained something worth having by remaining firm to his duty.

CHAPTER III.

CHARLIE HOBBS' TEMPTATIONS.

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

IT was a dark, gusty winter evening, and Ormond Lee was making his way home as fast as he could, when he passed a crowd of young people assembled before some large building, as if waiting for admission. On scanning the crowd and the place more cautiously, he found that the assemblage consisted for the most part of young lads and girls, and that they were standing in front of a music-hall, waiting for the opening of the doors. In the portico in front were suspended great flaring handbills, announcing a grand "entertainment" for the "benefit" of some singer, and inviting all to enter and see for themselves. As Ormond paused, he was rather interested to observe the differing expression on the many faces to be seen there, for the crowd was, as I said before, mainly made up of young people. Of course there were some of the customary saunterers and loungers, with opera-glasses and cigars, to be found, but they were studying the bills quietly, or puffing at their cigars, and Ormond took but little notice of them, his attention being wholly absorbed by the proceedings of the juniors. Some of the lads were sporting cigars also, and a few carried canes under their arms. Others were engaged in "chaffing" their comrades, or paying questionable compliments to the girls whom they escorted thither, while not a few were decidedly under the influence of liquor. It was quite a

study to observe the play of the different countenances as the gaslight fell full upon them, and the flickering light revealed to Ormond's eyes something of the moral character of those whom he observed. There were the pale faces of the clerk and office-boy, the sharp keen features of the scholar, and the more healthy, robust countenance of the manual labourer, but none of them were refined or beautified at all, by the passions brought into play at such a time and place, and under the influence of such associations. But the face which took Ormond's attention most, was one which he had been accustomed to meet every Sabbath afternoon at the class—that of Charlie Hobbs; and he moved a little apart sorrowfully, but eagerly, determined to watch his proceedings for this one evening. I have mentioned before that Charlie was something of a backslider—that is, while not making any profession of religion he had been a very hopeful character, but had gone back from that condition into one of careless, dangerous pleasure. Ormond knew that he was behaving somewhat recklessly, or at least he feared it, and now made up his mind to follow him, although secretly, and to watch his doings for that evening, that so he might perchance be able to drop a word of counsel.

Ormond had not waited long before the doors were opened, and the motley assemblage began to pour into the building. He followed in the train, still keeping his eye upon Charlie, who, having purchased a ticket for the gallery, made his way thither. Ormond, therefore, did the same, but ensconced himself in such a manner behind a pillar that he was secure from observation, while at the same time perfectly cognizant of Charlie's doings. Of course there were the usual performances which are to be found at music-halls, but they attracted Ormond but little, as he knew but too well that these things led to the ruin of many promising char-

acters. Among his acquaintance had been many whose fair fame had been thus blasted. Beside this, the smoking, drinking, and unseemly conduct which are the usual accompaniments of music-hall life were in the highest degree disgusting to him. The singing and music were very excellent, no doubt, but the dancing and the "characters" were more than objectionable, and Ormond felt sad at heart as he contemplated the future of those young people who occupied the galleries. Several of them he knew by sight, although not by name, for his mercantile pursuits brought him into contact with many such in the shape of office-boys, junior clerks, packers, and warehouse lads, to say nothing of the higher classes of merchants' clerks and warehousemen. Audience and entertainment were to all appearance suited to each other, for any jest or song more objectionable than the rest, won instant and uproarious applause; and none were better pleased than Charlie Hobbs. He was puffing a cigar, though very feebly, and the sick, greenish hue which overspread his countenance, showed what a novice he was at it. But he looked as if willing to undergo any amount of martyrdom to secure his title to "manliness"—that is to say, such manliness as smoking implies—and Ormond pitied him quite as much as he blamed him.

It was late before the performances were brought to a close, and Ormond feared that Charlie Hobbs would remain until the end. Judge, then, how greatly he was relieved when at eleven o'clock the lad got up and made his way to the door. In an instant Ormond was after him, and on getting down into the lobby he tapped him on the shoulder. Charlie turned quickly, but his tongue seemed paralysed as he saw his teacher.

"Charlie," said he, "I want you. Come with me a little way and tell me how you came to be in such a place as this."

Charlie thrust the unfinished end of his cigar into his pocket and sheepishly followed his teacher. Ormond would have him walk by his side, but there was a good streak of obstinacy in his composition which made him rather sulky. He didn't at all relish being caught in such disreputable company, and looked shabbier than he intended. But suddenly a thought seemed to strike him, and looking up with no small degree of impudence in his tone he said, "I didn't know you attended music-halls, teacher. If it's right for you, it can't be wrong for me."

"Just the thing I want to talk about, my lad. It's not right for me to attend them, and it is wrong for you. But I don't attend music-halls. I am a stranger to them as well as theatres."

"But you've been there to-night, haven't you, teacher?"

"Yes; but do you know, Charlie, that I went there to watch you?"

"To watch me!" said the lad.

He looked up, wondering what he should hear next; and as the light of the lamps fell full upon his face, Ormond could see that his mind was ill at ease.

"Yes, Charlie, to watch you. As I was going home from business this evening I caught sight of your face among the group waiting for admission to that hall. The sight filled me with sorrow, for I knew that then you were in dangerous company, as well as on dangerous ground. I feared that you were not what you should be, Charlie, for your later acquaintances and pursuits have been of the sort calculated to do you much injury. But when I saw you enter there I was prompted to go in too, for I wanted to see you and warn you. Have you an easy conscience, my lad, over your visit there?"

"But other lads go there, teacher," urged the boy. "All

the men and lads in our office go to such places sometimes. I can take good care of myself."

"I doubt that much, Charlie. Do you know that when you are on the devil's ground you are in dangerous quarters? Vice is presented to you in such a flattering aspect that you are attracted by it rather than by what is good. You are made to choose the evil and refuse the good. But apart from all this, Charlie, do you attend the music-hall with the sanction of your parents?"

"I didn't ask them, teacher."

"Why didn't you ask them?"

"Because I knew I shouldn't get it if I did."

"Just as I expected, Charlie," returned Ormond. "You are obliged to go secretly, knowing, as you do, that this sort of thing is in opposition to your parents' wishes. And let me ask you one more question: Does your pocket-money run to cigars and music-hall visiting? If not, who pays?"

"I'd rather not say," replied the lad, and the downcast, fearful, and apprehensive look which stole over his features proved Ormond's unspoken suspicions to be right. In these searching questions he had faintly indicated his fears, and Charlie was keen enough to understand them. "I'd rather not say; and besides, teacher, I think it's hardly fair to badger a fellow like this."

"I'm not badgering you, my good lad," replied Ormond. "You mistake me greatly if you think I am doing anything of the sort. I have only your welfare at heart; I seek your good in all I do; and now I am only speaking to you in this way in order to keep you from destruction. You are not as old as I am, Charlie, and you know much less of the world than I do. I can recall instances of promising young men who were led away step by step through just the same pursuits which you are following, and who were utterly

wrecked. I have one or two such moral wrecks now most vividly in my mind, and the places where they fell are like shoals and quicksands from which I would fain warn you off. Don't think me hard or unreasonable, Charlie, but you should take the alarm while in good time. Steer away from these dangers. Life has too many battles to be fought, too many sorrows to be borne, too many triumphs to be achieved, and too many honours to be gained, for the time to be frittered away in dangerous vices and doubtful amusements. I never knew a lad of the music-hall type achieve anything great or good, and I am persuaded that you will be no exception to the rule if you follow the course you have commenced."

"But I know many young men, teacher, who have done worse things than I do, and they are not come to ruin yet." The lad would neither be convinced nor persuaded if he could help it.

"I will just give you two passages to think upon in connection with this subject," replied Ormond. "'Can one go on hot coals and not be burned?' and 'A companion of fools shall be destroyed.' With reference to those others of whom you speak, perhaps the drama of their lives is not yet played out, or retribution has not overtaken them. But if you deem yourself safe, you make a fearful mistake. What are you, Charlie, that you should stand safely where others, as wise and as good as you, have fallen? Think over what I have said to you, and shun these things in the future. Good-night, my lad; may God's grace keep and preserve you amid the manifold temptations of this great city!"

CHAPTER IV.

ERNEST OSBORNE'S HOME TROUBLES.

A TIMID knock came to the door one evening an hour or so after Ormond was comfortably ensconced beside the drawing-room fire, slippers on, and paper in hand. It was answered by a servant, who found there a small, shivering, quiet lad, who gave the name of Ernest Osborne, and desired to see his teacher, Mr. Ormond Lee.

"Come in, my lad," said the servant-man, who knew full well his duty in regard to all his young master's pupils. "Come in and sit down a minute. Mr. Ormond is in, and I'll take him your message at once."

Ernest sat down, but held himself very upright, and refrained from touching the chair with his feet. It was a fault of his at home to rest his muddy boots on the chairs, but the grandeur of Mr. Lee's entrance-hall effectually deterred him from any such indiscretion here.

"If you please, sir," said the man, going to the drawing-room, "here is one of your Sunday-school boys asking to see you for a few minutes."

"Which of them?"

"He gives the name of Ernest Osborne, sir."

"All right. Show him into my room, and tell him I'll be there in a minute."

Ormond's room was a snug little ante-room adjoining the hall, fitted up with especial reference to his own pursuits and tastes. Here he could study his lessons, practise his flute, experiment with chemicals, and arrange his fishing-tackle, without encountering the ire of the housekeeper on account

of the "litter." Into this *sanctum* Ernest was shown, and he had scarcely sat down before Ormond was with him.

"Well, Ernest, my boy, did you want to see me? Is anything wrong?"

"Yes, teacher," and the lad's face assumed a most lugubrious aspect; "there is an execution for rent put into our house, and the men are going to seize all our things for sale. We shouldn't owe anything, but that father has been out of a situation for some time past, and you know, sir, that makes all the difference."

It does indeed make all the difference when the breadwinner is incapacitated from supplying the home with means. Ormond remembered noticing how shabby and pale-faced Ernest had been of late. Here was the solution of the mystery.

"What situation did your father fill?"

"A clerk's, sir. And when this trouble came upon us I could think of no friend to speak to but you. And I don't know, sir, that I have any right to come to you to help us out; but if you don't help us, nobody else can or will, teacher."

"How long have the men been in possession, Ernest?"

"This is the second day, teacher, and father has been trying ever since yesterday morning to find a friend who will either lend him some money or promise him employment, because if he could succeed, the landlord says he would take a part of the rent that is due, and wait for the rest. He knows father to be an honest man, sir, and wouldn't be hard upon him if there was any prospect of paying it. But father can hear of nothing nor nobody that could help him, so in our trouble I have come off to you."

It is a sad thing to be without friends and employment in a large city. You may be as upright as Job, but if you

are as "poor as Job" you may die for all the help you may get. The noisy saucy mendicant, and the whining impostor, who will not hesitate to beg, lie, impose, or steal, may make a good thing out of poverty, and thrive upon the alms they receive; but a genuine deserving man, who has fallen into difficulties through a temporary lack of employment, and is destitute of the necessary impudence, may starve and die.

"Well, go back and tell your father that I will be with him in a few minutes. I may not be able to do much for you, but what little I can do I will. I remember very well where you live."

"Thank you, teacher; I knew you would do what you could for us. I told father so. I won't lose a minute going back; it will be such a comfort to them to know you are coming." And off the lad bounded as Ormond let him out at the hall door.

It did not take many minutes to get ready. Ormond quickly threw off his slippers, and equipped himself in boots and overcoat. From his constant visits to the members of his class in case of illness or absence, he was quite familiar with the situation of each home. Ernest Osborne had not long been back before his teacher's knock came to the door. Mrs. Osborne let him in, and as she shook hands with him Ormond noticed that her eyes were red and swollen with weeping. Silently she placed a chair for him, and as silently he sat down, taking meanwhile mentally a rapid survey of how matters stood there. Ernest had gone out to the back of the premises to summon his father.

Ormond was not long in taking in all the surroundings of the case. There was the mother on one side of the fireplace, cowering over a handful of fire in the grate, while the baby and two or three other young children nestled under her wing. Ernest was occupying what seemed to be his father's

arm-chair, on the opposite side. At the farther end of the room, seated at a table, were two men, who bore the unmistakable traces, both in manner and action, of their vocation. That they were "in possession" no one could doubt, who noticed their swagger and their easy familiarity. They were both smoking long clay pipes, and between them was standing a quart pot of ale. They would be no welcome visitors in any man's home; but to one who had been worsted in the battle of life, and was completely at their mercy, the presence of such men must have been simply intolerable.

Mr. Osborne came in at the summons of his son Ernest, and advanced towards Ormond, apologizing in a broken-spirited sort of way for the miserable circumstances under which he solicited his help. "But I assure you, sir," he added, "I am not to blame. I have tried and tried again to get employment, but in vain. If I could have gained work neither my family nor my home would have been found in this plight."

"Can you come with me to a more convenient place for a minute or two?" said Ormond. "I will talk matters over with you, and see if anything can be done."

"I have no place but this, sir, if you won't object to it," replied Mr. Osborne, leading the way to the kitchen.

"Oh, certainly," replied Ormond, following. "Now what is the amount of the debt for which these men are put in possession? Is it a great amount?"

"Only about five pounds; but that is a fortune to me, sir. Such a sum has not crossed my hands these many weeks."

"And suppose you can find a friend willing to advance this sum, so as to get rid of these fellows, what are your intentions or views with reference to the future? Have you any plan or hopes after this difficulty is tided over?"

"I have no plan at all, sir; but if I could choose my own

way I would emigrate to America. You see, sir, there are too many of us in England to get employment. Labour is plentiful and cheap, but in a new country labour would be more scarce, and so there would be greater chance. It is not my fault that I am thus situated. I was employed for years as entering-clerk by Messrs. Colston—you remember them, sir?—in the hardware line. Well, they failed, and all their hands were thrown out of employ. It is comparatively easy for a young single man to shift his quarters, but it's not so easy for a man who has a wife and family, to do this. I had a home to break up, you see; and so we thought if I could get another situation in Liverpool it would be best to remain here, even at a less salary. But every place seems full, and if ever there's a post vacant there are ten applicants for it; and so we have gone on, week after week, spending our small savings, and sinking lower and lower in the mire. It's enough to drive a man mad, sir, if he's willing and able to work."

"It is, Mr. Osborne, and I sympathize most fully with you. But may I ask how is it that you think of emigration as a remedy for your condition? Have you considered the matter in all its bearings?"

"I have a brother in New York who is doing well; and he has many times invited me to come out. We should have a home with him for a short time, while I was looking out for a place, and then, you know, sir, I could soon get another home. A man who has once enjoyed a happy home is never settled, I think, while he's out of one."

"You are right," replied Ormond. "And now, to make short work of the matter, I will lend you the five pounds. Pay me when better days dawn upon you. Settle with these men inside, and to-morrow, if you will come to my office, I will talk over the emigration scheme with you."

CHAPTER V.

AN EMIGRANT SHIP.

“ On the stilly twilight air
We would breathe our solemn prayer :
Bless the dear ones of our home,
Guide us through the ocean's foam,
To the light of those dear eyes
Where our heart's best treasure lies,
Guard us, shield us, mighty Lord,
Thou dost not sleep :
Still the tempest with Thy word,
Rule the deep.”

OVER and over again did Ormond and Mr. Osborne reconsider the “emigration scheme.” It seemed curious that an able, clever man like John Osborne could not obtain instant employment, and at a good salary too, but so it was. And so it is everywhere in the present day. There is work enough of every kind to be done in the world, both mental and manual, but then the workers are out of all proportion to the work. The market is overstocked with anxious, eager labourers of every class and degree, striving to win permission from their fellow-men to toil for those who are nearest and dearest to them. Thus it comes to pass that so many fail in the struggle for subsistence, and are pushed aside by younger and more fortunate competitors. John Osborne was one of those unfortunates who are so pushed on one side; and to him, in common with others of his class, emigration seemed the most feasible method out of his difficulty. There is always a certain charm about beginning life afresh in a new country, and a greater charm, I think, to those who have failed in the old country than to anybody else. To John Osborne, America was the El Dorado of his

hopes, and no argument or inducement would shake him from his purpose.

But Mrs. Osborne shed many bitter tears over the prospect. Many and many a time she had watched the emigrant vessels steaming away out of port, with tearful, anxious groups on board, and sorrowing, aching-hearted groups on shore, waving a mutual adieu to each other, and had meanwhile thanked God that her lot was different. She had never cared about emigration; she liked the old country, and generally speaking, "the lines had fallen" to her "in pleasant places." The home which she so fondly cherished had been hers through all their married life. To it her husband had taken her when first married, and in it the angels, both of Life and Death had visited them. Seven children had been born to them under that roof, and of these two had taken flight to the "Better Land" while yet in innocent infancy. And when a home has been sanctified by joys and sorrows, by blessings and bereavements, by births and deaths, it seems too sacred a thing to be lightly broken up. Mrs. Osborne felt this as she looked around. All her little world was there, all her household gods were there, and if they were shattered it seemed to her she should know peace and content nevermore.

Ernest, on the contrary, was pleased and proud at the prospect of seeing a foreign land, and of playing his part in the great drama of work-a-day life there. As to his "getting on," that was all settled in his mind as a thing respecting which there could be no manner of doubt. To most young minds the future is clad in a garment of radiant promise; and the more distant the sober realities of life are, the more glittering an aspect do they assume. To be sure Ernest regretted leaving his teacher and classmates; but that feeling was nothing compared with the exultation and glad-

ness which coloured all his anticipations of the new life which was in store for them all.

"You see, sir," said Mr. Osborne, as Ormond sat talking with them one evening, and discussing the *pros* and *cons* of the scheme—"you see, sir, I have failed in England, not through laziness, incompetence, or dishonesty, but simply because I cannot obtain employment. There are more workers by far here in England than our country will support. Some of us must go away to make room for the others, and I will, for one. America is a fine country, sir. My brother wrote me the other day that no one except the lazy or drunken need be poor there. The land is wide enough for each to flourish and prosper without injuring his neighbour. He went out a poor man, and is now in a capital position in life.

"I will pay you, sir, depend on it, as soon as I have succeeded in gaining a home for my wife and little ones," he went on to say, for Ormond had advanced another five pounds, seeing that the sale of the household goods did not yield sufficient to pay the expenses of the passage for the whole family. The sum thus realized, it is true, was a pretty fair one; but it takes a large amount of money to pay for the escort of husband and wife and a little family of children across the Atlantic in search of a new home. So Ormond had proved himself the friend in need, who, as the proverb says, "is the friend indeed." "Not a day will pass over my head but I shall remember your kindness to me and mine in my hour of distress. The money I earn will be looked upon as sacred to the purpose of repayment."

"You are welcome to any kindness I have shown you," replied Ormond. "My motto has been to do good as I had opportunity, and if I have helped you in any way I hope it will prosper. I'm sorry to lose Ernest, though. He

is a quick, clever little fellow, and if he had a favourable chance would do himself some good. I should like to hear from you at intervals, and you too, Ernest," he added, turning to the lad, who sat by quietly listening, "you must not omit to write me frequently."

"I will, teacher," rejoined Ernest. "It won't be through forgetfulness if I don't. I suppose there are Sunday-schools in America, teacher?"

"Yes, my boy, all through the land nearly; at least wherever you find civilization and religion. And as for New York you will find them there on every hand. New York is almost the home of large Sabbath-schools. But you will think of us sometimes, Ernest, and especially if temptation be present with you. Should any evil companion seek to entice you out of the straight path of rectitude and honesty, remember the counsels and cautions we have so often talked over in our Sabbath lessons. We shall think of you often, my lad, and some of us will pray for you."

"Thank you, teacher," replied Ernest, and a subdued, saddened look stole over his face, for, in spite of his boyish anticipations of a new country, he really felt the severing of the ties between classmates and teacher. Those pleasant Sunday afternoons had done much towards welding the hearts of the teacher and the taught in a common bond of sympathy.

"And remember, too, Ernest," proceeded Ormond, "that the same God rules on the ocean and in America, as here in Liverpool. If circumstances of danger arise, and you become a prey to fear or trouble, think of Him who holds the seas in the hollow of his hand. In all circumstances you may go to this Heavenly Friend, as I have told you before, and realize help and deliverance. And if difficulties should arise, and you become puzzled between two courses of action,

to decide on the best, carry your difficulty to the light of God's word. If a course be right it will be commended there; if wrong, it will be condemned there. I have known many young fellows who have grown up into life, some of them my own schoolmates and companions, and I have always noticed that those who made the Bible the man of their counsel, and the guide of their youth, have succeeded where others have failed. They have succeeded because, whether poor or rich, they have brought out noble lives, full of benefit and comfort to man and honour to God, while those who despised good and holy things have most miserably failed in both particulars."

"When do you sail, Mr. Osborne?" continued Ormond, turning to the boy's father, who sat an interested listener to the conversation.

"On Tuesday next. The broker will clear away our goods on the Monday, and we shall go on board the same night. By this means we shall save expense, and go at once from our home into the vessel. My wife takes on a deal about going, because, sir, she has always been accustomed to Liverpool, and all her friends are here. It seems harder work for her to go abroad than it does for me, poor thing. I hope she will be reconciled to the change."

"It is harder for a woman to emigrate, and break up all home ties, than for a man. But you must consider that you leave behind care, hardship, and trouble, to exchange it, I hope, for employment, plenty, and prosperity."

"God grant it," replied Mr. Osborne, and his careworn face betrayed the emotions which he felt so powerfully that he rose and hastily changed the subject.

There are times when even a man is overcome, and then solitude and silence are best.

Tuesday came, and with it the sailing of the good ship

Prussian. Among the many groups assembled to witness the departure of the hundreds of emigrants who were sailing in her, stood Ormond Lee, who had come to speak one last word of encouragement and comfort to the Osbornes; and sorely they needed it, poor things, for the miseries and discomforts of the steerage, in addition to their other worries, seemed enough to break Mrs. Osborne's heart. There she was sitting upon a little box, containing a few catables for the children, who would not be likely to relish the ship's fare, and the little ones clustering round her, crying and frightened at the conflicting sights and sounds going on around them. Ernest had his hands full of wrappers and sundries, and his father stood like a man petrified, watching his wife and little ones. Ormond had, with his usual kind thoughtfulness, bespoken the steward's kind offices for them, by the present of a little money, and, in addition, had ordered a small chest of useful articles of food to be brought on board for their use. These kind attentions cheered and warmed their desolate hearts, for they were in that position in which a friend is like a heaven-sent blessing; and as they sailed away down the Mersey into the broad ocean, the memory of past unexpected blessings they had received, inspired them with sweet hope and confidence for the future. It could not be all dark, with such a beneficent Father watching over them.

CHAPTER VI.

AN ABSENTEE IN MORE SENSES THAN ONE.

ORMOND was sometimes worried, like a great many other teachers, by absentees. As a rule, he could generally depend on seeing some half-dozen out of the eight scholars who composed his class; but he found that generally speaking they were the same lads who were absent from time to time. The one most given to this trick was Herbert Wilson—a lad who, though full of fun and mischievous tricks, was in no small degree watched over and cared for by Ormond. If any mischief were afloat in the class, or any trick to be set in motion, it was pretty safe to conclude that Herbert Wilson had a hand in it; yet, in spite of all, Ormond liked the boy. You could not help it; his rollicking, free-and-easy air, his unabashed *nonchalance* of manner, and his ready wit, made you pardon his faults while you condemned them.

Herbert had been away from school for two Sundays, and was missing still. Clearly, then, it became Ormond's duty to hunt him up. So, one fine afternoon, after office hours were over, he went in search of him. It was not an inviting quarter in which to visit; Liverpool rejoices in some queer localities, and Exton's Court was about one of the roughest. Samples of almost all the lower orders, such as are to be found in a large city, resided there; and along with thieves, cadgers, housebreakers, and tramps, resided honest, hard-working men, driven into such ugly quarters because of the want of suitable house accommodation in accordance with their means. Samuel Wilson, and Esther his wife were hard-working people, but somewhat forbidding to a

stranger; and as Ormond had visited the house before, he was not unprepared for the kind of reception he would have. The father was a sour, moody, silent kind of a man, only anxious for a quiet corner in which to enjoy his pipe after his day's work was done; and Mrs. Wilson was a passionate, querulous woman, scolding at the children continually for being in "her way," and yet not trusting them enough to allow them out of her sight. She was washing as Ormond went in; while her husband was smoking, with one foot on the fender, gazing moodily into the fire. One or two little children were squabbling over some broken toys, while the baby in the cradle was moaning a sort of accompaniment in the most doleful of minor keys. No wild Gregorian chant ever died away so mournfully as the cry of that baby, as Ormond opened the door and stepped in.

The little ones stopped their squabbling for a moment, Mrs. Wilson peered through the steam towards the door, and Mr. Wilson took his pipe out of his mouth as the stranger entered. As for baby, why, he couldn't be expected to know any better; so, after a moment's pause, he commenced again, more lustily than ever.

"Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson," said Ormond cheerily; "I'm no stranger to you, I hope. I've come to inquire after Herbert. He's been missing from the class these two Sundays, and so I've come to hunt him up. I hope he's not been ill."

"I wish he had," returned the mother, in that miserably sorrowful tone of hers; "I wish he had; 'twould have been a sight better for us."

"It's more than we know ourselves where Herbert is," said the father, "and I'm sure we can't tell you. I know I should just like to catch him for one blessed quarter of an hour; I'd be bound to make him know it for a month to

me. If I wouldn't rope's-end him as long as I could hold him, then my name's not Sam Wilson."

"Indeed!" said Ormond, not a little startled. "Why, what has he done? Has he been getting into mischief?" He thought only of policemen and prison-cells.

"Mischief indeed!" replied Mrs. Wilson, who here gave one of the little ones a slap, and sent them both off to bed; "I think he *has* been in mischief. Here we've kept him and saved for him until now, thinking to make him fit for something; and he's gone and run away just as he ought to be of some use to us, and bring in something towards the expense of his keep. A great hungry boy like that takes something every week to feed him; he doesn't live on the air, I can tell you; beside wearing out clothes and boots; and as for dirt and mess, there's no end of it with boys of that age. I declare I go to bed every night as fairly worn out as I can be, and now after all my slaving what use is it? It's nothing but slave, slave—work, work—from morning till night, ill or well, until you're fit to die; and then if one does die, there's nobody would care very much, I reckon."

Mrs. Wilson was grumbling considerably beyond the mark, and she knew she was; for though Sam Wilson was a moody cross sort of a man, he knew that his little children, and his home too, would miss his wife very sadly if anything happened to her. She was making a very great mistake, therefore, in scolding away in this random style, but she was not the first who had ever done so. It is something trying, it must be confessed, when you are sick and weary, to have to contend with a little family, poor circumstances, and fretful babies. Even under the most favourable circumstances, to have one infant crying in the cradle, another sick and wailing, and a third just old enough to be in every kind of mischief, is

somewhat trying to the strongest nerves; but what must it be to remember that the tubful of wet clothes is waiting to be washed out, the kitchen to be tidied, and the dinner to be cooked? This must be something very trying indeed, and so Mrs. Wilson found it.

"I hope your son has not got into trouble at the hands of the law," Ormond ventured to say. Visions of prosecutors and lawyers were looming before his eyes, as he only thought of Herbert's "starting" to evade the law. This view of the matter appeared to be the most natural; accordingly he jumped at it forthwith.

"Oh, no; that is, unless he has since he left us, in which case it would serve him right," returned the father. "The fact is, he and I had some words about a fortnight ago, because the gentleman would stay out larking with other boys, and I gave him a few cuts with this strap. Next morning he was nowhere to be found; so I conclude that he found it too hot for him, and hooked it." "Hooked it" is a slang term for running away.

"And have you any idea where he is gone?" asked Ormond. "Have you heard anything of his whereabouts?"

"No," replied the father, who had by this time resumed his pipe, "and I don't want to."

"Yes, you do, Sam Wilson," put in the mother, as sharply as possible. She had now taken up the baby, and was rocking it to sleep. As the chair had no rockers, the rocking was a noisy succession of knocks, as the chair went to and fro on the floor, which made the work of conversing a labour of more effort than profit. "You know very well that you've a-fretted yourself nigh on to death about him, and that one line from him would do us more good than anything else. Why, what's the use of pretending you don't care for him, when everybody knows that you do?"

Mr. Wilson did not reply. He did not dare to reply to his wife, having been well schooled into obedience by her tart tongue; but besides this, he did really care for Herbert, and the lad's exploit had worried him dreadfully.

"And have you made inquiries for him anywhere?" asked Ormond.

"Yes," said Wilson; "I've been down to the docks most days since he started, thinking that perhaps I should see him there; for I know as most boys as runs away takes to the sea. I did myself once. I ran away from home and got engaged as cabin-boy, but my father came after me and brought me back. But it was no go; I couldn't find anything of his whereabouts."

"Have you any clue by which to find him?" asked Ormond. "Did he give you any hint of what he was going to do?"

"None except this bit of a note," replied Mrs. Wilson, taking a dirty piece of paper from behind a chimney ornament, and smoothing it out as she placed it before Ormond. Taking it up he read it. It was Herbert's writing, plainly enough; he knew his schoolboy style quite well. It ran thus: "This is to tell you, father and mother, that I'm off. I seem to be in everybody's way, and I don't fancy being licked or grumbled at every day of my life. I suppose I can do something, or be of some use to somebody, and so I shall just find out what I can do. Good-bye. I won't cost you any more if I can help it. Don't trouble to look for me. When I've got a good berth I'll write. I'm going a good many miles away."

"And if you'll come upstairs, sir, I'll show you just where I found it. We had no idea that he was off, for he seemed to go to bed as well as ever; but it seems as if he'd made up his mind before, for he took the best of his clothes in a

bundle, and next morning, when Sam went in to call him, we found his bed had not been slept in. Come and see for yourself just how he left it."

Ormond went up at her request. Sam Wilson carried the candle, and Mrs. Wilson followed with the baby. That baby seemed to be always fretting; it really was as much as its mother could do to keep it quiet long enough to answer her visitor's queries, for she took the chief part of the conversation upon herself. The bedroom was a small one, somewhat long and narrow. Two beds nearly filled the available space, and in one were the two little ones whom Ormond had seen despatched so summarily to bed a little before, while in the other, which was a narrow single bedstead, Herbert had slept. There it was, clean if homely, and it had remained like that from the morning the lad departed. Some few of his garments—the worst of them—were on a stool by the bedside, as it seemed that he had made a selection of his best clothes in which to array himself. Ormond looked on the other sleeping children, as their dark curly heads nestled together on the pillow, and hoped sincerely that they would not find, as they grew up, their home too miserable and too uncomfortable to remain in it. He sighed as he reflected that the fault was not all on the lad's side. More cheerful surroundings, and more judicious, appreciative treatment, might have made his home a home to him in the true sense of the word, not merely a place in which to eat and sleep. Some homes are mere dwelling-places; but others, whether poor or grand, fulfil all the requirements of a home, being to those who nestle under their shelter the most sacred spots on earth. It is in such as these that child natures expand, and boys and girls grow up to be called blessed by their race. Nobody wants to run away from such homes.

"Was Herbert generally a bad boy?" asked Ormond. "I mean, did he generally cause you much trouble?"

"Yes, a great deal; but nobody would think it who didn't live with him," replied Mrs. Wilson as they went downstairs again. "I'm sure that many's the time that he's come home with the knees of his trousers split open or his jacket covered with mud, when I know it needn't have been. Then if I sent him on an errand he'd forget the right thing, or else he'd stop about an hour or two before he showed back again. He'd be dreadful saucy, too, sometimes, and that aggravatin', that his father has many a time thrashed him black and blue. Haven't you, Sam Wilson?"

CHAPTER VII.

SEARCHING FOR THE TRUANT.

"WELL, I can't say but what I have," returned Sam; "but if I'd a known that this was to be the end on't, I'd a laid it on a little lighter sometimes. Whopping and thrashing the boy didn't seem to do him the good I thought it would. Howsomever, if I'd got him here now, I wouldn't like to be answerable for him."

"And serve him right too," replied Mrs. Wilson. "I wonder what a boy is to worry one's heart out of one for, and not beat him. When I was a girl, boys and girls too were beaten a sight more than they are now, both at home and at school; and to my thinking they were all the better for it."

"In the past generation," said Ormond, "the rod was the remedy for everything wrong, but we don't quite think so now. If a lad is incorrigible, we come to it at last; but first of all we try moral suasion. A boy must be hardened indeed who cannot be governed sometimes by the law of kindness."

"Oh! such kindness is all nonsense, Mr. Ormond Lee," said Mrs. Wilson; "and I guess you'd find it so if you were in my place. Suppose you'd sent off a boy to school, clean and tidy, and slaved yourself to death to do it, and then, while you were in the midst of squalling babies, and all sorts of worries, he were to come back plastered with mud from head to foot, and the knees of his trousers out? What would you do then? I tell you what I do: I just fetch him a good sharp cut or two with anything that comes first to hand, and let him know that I sha'n't be trifled with. Nothing like being short and sharp with children,—that's my mind."

Mrs. Wilson had a mind of her own upon most matters, and as to the correction and training of children, she had a special set of opinions, which she was not slow to enunciate for the benefit of any listener.

"Well, I think," replied Ormond, "that persuasion might avail even in the case of torn trousers and dirty jackets. Moral offences ought to receive the greater punishment, not accidents. Many lads have been driven into reckless behaviour by this sort of treatment."

"Yes, I suppose you has your theories about bringing up children, as well as other folks that haven't got none; but wait till you have some of your own, and then you'll tell a different tale. You don't know nothing about poor people's families," said Sam Wilson, sitting down again to his pipe. "I never see'd an unmarried gent or old maid yet but what

know'd a sight better how to bring up children than they that had 'em; but that sort of talk won't do, sir."

"I only wish I'd put Herbert to work a couple of years ago," interposed Mrs. Wilson again. "It would have done him a sight of good, and maybe kept him from running away. This is all the good that eddication does; and yet rich folks talk as if it would do everything for a boy."

"Education does not spoil a boy, Mrs. Wilson, but sometimes he will put it to a bad use. However if Herbert *has* run away, we will hope that something will turn up for him, so that his education does not hurt him. Meanwhile it will be our best policy to try and find him. As he is too young for the army he will be sure to try the navy, if no suitable situation turns up. Have you thought of searching in that direction?"

"No, sir," replied Sam Wilson; "I've been no further than the docks, for I'm not much of one to push my way about among strangers. And then, you see, sir, some fellows will jeer at you if they know you're looking for a runaway boy, and put obstacles in your way instead of helping you."

"Just so," replied Ormond. "I shall have a few hours to spare to-morrow, and if all be well, I will also have a search for him. I may be able to look farther than you could."

"Thank you kindly, sir," rejoined Sam Wilson; "I can tell you that if you find him you'll take away a big load from my mind. Sometimes I don't know what to do with myself, I don't. If he *was* a bad boy, you know, sir, he's our boy."

"And I'm sure," put in Mrs. Wilson, "I'd be glad to see him come in; for what with the worry of the baby and the other children, besides all the rest of it that comes to my share, this last trouble seems too much to bear."

You will see from this observation that if Mr. and Mrs. Wilson were not model parents, they had enough of parental

feeling to be really anxious about their boy, and to wish him home again. I think a father or mother must be far gone in hardness of heart to become indifferent to their own flesh and blood. Such a spirit would leave all fatherliness and motherliness out of the question.

Frankie Huntingdon was still at Ormond's home, and after breakfast, next morning, he proposed a walk to the little fellow. Frankie jumped at the chance with delight, for "a walk with Uncle Ormond" was a great treat. Ormond, bearing the interview of the previous day in mind, shaped his course towards the docks.

"Where are we going, uncle?" asked Frankie.

"Going down to the docks, Frank. I wish to look for somebody, who may be there. I don't know certainly, but perhaps I may hear something of him."

"Who is it, then, uncle?" said the little fellow, his childish curiosity being fully roused.

"One of my Sunday-school lads. You saw me write his name in a little pocket Bible the other day,—Herbert Wilson. Do you remember?"

"Yes, I do. But what made him run away? Has any one served him badly?"

"I do not know, Frank. It may be; but at any rate I want to find him. Hallo, there!" he shouted to a seafaring man who was coming up out of the hold of a ship which he knew had been lying in the dock for a week or two, "halloo, there! How long has the *Belladonna* been in port?"

"Some three weeks, nearly, sir. We shall soon start again, sir, now. Bound to South America, our next voyage. Our cargo is almost ready."

The man knew Ormond very well, his ship having had dealings with the mercantile house which he represented. Ormond in brief words explained his errand to him.

"Have you engaged any new lads on board for this voyage?"

"Yes, sir, two of them; regular landlubbers they are too. Don't know stem from stern, much less how to handle a rope or furl a sail. I don't know the good of engaging such specimens, but I suppose the skipper knows best."

"Do you know their names?"

"Blessed if I do. We calls one Tom and the other Dick, but I don't rightly know their Christian names. They are down below, busy storing away. Would you like a look at them?"

"Thank you, I should;" and Ormond went down the ladder accompanied by Frank, who with the eagerness and curiosity of his age was determined to see all. Below, among a lot of men engaged in arranging and storing away the cargo were a couple of lads about the age of Herbert Wilson, but complete strangers to Ormond. To the best of his knowledge he had never seen them before, so turning away with a shake of the head, he apologized to the man who had permitted him to go down, and went up on deck.

"He isn't down there," said he, as soon as they were on deck. "The lads you have here are much his age and height, but I don't know them at all. Do you remember if any other lad has applied during your stay in port?"

"No, sir, I leaves all such things to the skipper, who, I suppose, knows best. And besides, you see there are so many lads lounging about the docks every day, for fun or work, that I shouldn't be likely to notice one more than the other. Howsomever, there's two or three other ships here close to us, that have been in port as long or longer than we, and they may know something of him. Here's Bill Jarvis, of the *Nestor*," and he pointed to a strapping, brown-faced sailor, who was shambling along with the gait peculiar to

seamen, with his hands in his pockets, chewing a quid of tobacco. "Most likely he can tell you something or other of the missing gent. I say, Bill"—and he raised his voice as if in the midst of a storm at sea—"do you know anything of a young fellow wot 'as to cut his wisdom teeth, engaging as cabin-boy? He's a runaway chap—more fool he—and this gentleman thinks he's made his way here."

"No. Our cap'n wants no such small fry on board the *Nestor*. We had two of them last voyage, and they sulked and spooneyed so much arter home, that we were precious glad to be rid of them again. Don't know anything of your treasure." And Bill Jarvis turned away in sublime indifference to all further questioning. Clearly, Ormond was making no headway yet.

"Well, I suppose I must inquire elsewhere," said Ormond; "but if you should hear of such a boy, just communicate with me at the office. The lad's name, you will remember, is Herbert Wilson. If you can help me to find him I'll not forget you."

"All right, sir," rejoined the man, as he touched his cap. "I'll bear it in mind, but I don't think you've much chance of finding the young gent. I expect he's off far enough by this time, for if he's a native of Liverpool he'd be sure to make tracks out of it pretty soon."

However, Ormond went to the other parts of the docks, and spent nearly half a day in making inquiries, but all to no purpose. Nobody could furnish the information he required, and out of all the cabin-boys he unearthed, not one resembled the missing lad. So he went home again, rather tired and disheartened, it must be owned. He had scarcely expected such an escapade from Herbert Wilson. It was rather hard to send the tidings of non-success to Sam Wilson, but it had to be done.

Time went on, and no tidings arrived of the boy, until one Sunday afternoon, while in the class, Hugh Blake burst out with—"Teacher, do you know where Herbert Wilson is?"

"No, Hugh; I wish I did."

"Well, then, I can tell you, for here's his own handwriting to prove it;" and he held up a piece of a letter, scrawled over in big, black characters. "He's on board the *Penelope*, one of Her Majesty's training-ships at Plymouth, and he likes it stunning. He says so himself. Here's the letter; he sent it to me only this week." And he handed it to Ormond.

Ormond read it, and recognized it in diction and orthography as one of Herbert's genuine efforts of penmanship. It was dated from on board the *Penelope*, right enough; and stated that he was in training, adding that after his period of training should be over he should be drafted into another ship, and most probably be sent abroad. It was something grand, Hugh Blake thought, to see foreign service; and he was all excitement over it. That boy had a tremendous love of adventure. Ormond gave the letter back to him, only saying he felt sorry Herbert Wilson had not acted differently; and the subject dropped. However, the day did not pass without Ormond communicating with the Wilsons, who were both glad and sorry at the news they heard.

CHAPTER VIII

A DANGEROUS OUTLOOK.

"Do you see who's coming? Cram that cigar into your pocket, unless you want a lecture, will you?"

"What? What do you mean? Who on earth is coming that I must turn so straight-faced as all that? Here goes, however, and now speak plainly if you please."

"Do you happen to know a gentleman by the name of Mr. Ormond Lee? Because if you do, you'll have to speak to him in ten seconds, or my name is not Charlie Hobbs."

"Oh! that's another thing; though I don't know that smoking a cigar is such a terrible crime."

"Hold your tongue, George; the Philistines are upon us."

And so they were, in the person of Ormond, who, as the lads' teacher, exercised a kind of unconscious influence over them in their everyday life—that is if they thought any action or actions of theirs would come under his cognisance. Charlie Hobbs had been "taken to task," as he phrased it, more than once over his sayings and doings; and the sight of his teacher, as he and George Smyth were sauntering up the street, one mid-day, puffing away at some cigars of the "cheap and nasty" type, was sufficient to make him snatch his own cigar out of his mouth at the same time that he uttered the warning to George. The two lads had become rather close friends lately, seeing that George Smyth had been taken as junior clerk in the counting-house of the printing-office where Charlie Hobbs was apprenticed. Owing to their connection at school they had become most

intimate, and all the more that neither of them were particularly acquainted with anybody else in the establishment. But the worry was that this intimacy boded no good to either of the lads, and the deeper they got in friendship the deeper they got into the mazes of that "fast life" which has so peculiar a fascination for youths of that age. Charlie Hobbs was of a buoyant, sanguine temperament, ready to engage in anything, whether doubtful or otherwise, which seemed to promise enjoyment; and George Smyth, slow and easy as he always was, followed in his wake, in most unthinking fashion. The one was too thoughtless and vain to fear danger, and the other was too simple or too stupid to interpose an objection, even if his conscience saw any. Under these auspices George was making acquaintance with some phases of "fast" Liverpool life, to which hitherto he had been a total stranger. His parents were decent, tidy tradespeople in a small way, and were very glad to secure the chance of putting George into so respectable an office; but sometimes their fears were roused and their suspicions excited by the late hours into which George had recently got. But to their cautions and remonstrances the lad always preferred a decent excuse, and so their eyes were blinded, Mr. Smyth only remarking, with some asperity, that "office-hours weren't so late in his day." As I have mentioned before, Ormond judged pretty certainly, from Charlie Hobbs' manner and habits of late, that he was travelling the downward road in manners and morals, and had spoken more than once rather closely to him on the subject. His visits to music-halls were far too frequent for his means, and in addition to smoking, he had also adopted the habit of drinking. It was therefore little wonder that he filled his place but seldom at the Sabbath class, and when there, manifested such a miserable, absent sort of

manner, that it became only too plain what a weariness the exercise was. Owing to this Ormond was puzzled how to deal with the lad. He feared that too much oversight, and too great an amount of interference with his pursuits, would utterly estrange him; while, on the other hand, his conscience urged him to perform the part of a faithful monitor. In cases of this sort the position of the teacher is always most awkward and critical. You do not know how to deal with lads of this age: being neither boys nor men, they have not the obedient confidence of the one, nor the sober judgment of the other. Generally, between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, much precocity of a painful type is developed, and along with it a great deal of conceit and impudence. He is a wise teacher who steers his lads safely along at this time, and manages to retain their loyalty until they have advanced beyond the dangerous period; for as a rule, if you can secure a boy's attendance at Sunday-school after the age of nineteen, you may make sure of him either for the Bible-class or the teaching staff. It must be a trial of patience to see one's Sunday-school boys sauntering down the street, caps on one side, cigars in mouth, hands in pockets—both in manners and habits aping those empty-headed fools who act like decoy-ducks to so many of our elder scholars, in luring them to ruin. In this position Ormond found himself on the day in question. As fate would have it, he heard the last remark of Charlie Hobbs, and was at no loss to apply the interpretation. Charlie Hobbs knew that he had heard it too, and as his eyes met his teacher's the tell-tale blood mounted to his brow in a moment.

"Good-morning, Charlie," said Ormond, as he held out his hand. "How are you to-day?"

"Pretty well, thanks, teacher."

"And, George, I hope you are well," Ormond continued, as he turned to the other lad.

"Yes, teacher, thank you;" and here George turned very red in the face, for smoke began to issue from his pocket, and much he feared that the result would be an unsightly hole. He looked across at Charlie, and Charlie looked at him, both of them being in what is called a "thorough fix." Ormond noted the perplexed looks of the boys, and saw in a twinkling the awkward position into which George, with his accustomed ill luck, had got.

"Your pocket is on fire, George," said Ormond. "What have you got there? Have you been smoking?"

"No—yes—I only begun;" and the poor lad looked so dumfounded, as he extracted the offending cigar, while his teacher promptly caught hold of the burning pocket and prevented the damage from going further, that Ormond could not but feel amused at the speedy and unlooked-for detection which had followed their indulgence.

"You only began, and when you saw me coming you thrust the cigar, all alight as it was, into your pocket; eh? That's it, isn't it, George?" said Ormond.

"Yes, I suppose." But a sullen look stole over his face, and Ormond noticed again that dogged sort of obstinacy which had troubled him so often before.

"Well, suppose both of you were to give up smoking; wouldn't it be better than wasting your money, and burning your pockets—to say nothing of injuring your health, or of paving the way for other bad habits? 'Lost in smoke' is not a pleasant reflection, as you think of the sums spent in this way through the year."

"It is no more harm for us than for other people, I suppose," interposed Charlie Hobbs. He was fairly at bay, for the idea of being caught in the act of hiding their cigars

exasperated him so much that he felt equal to saying anything. He hated to be thought *mean*, but then he had silly ideas of what constituted meanness.

"It is harm for you, and other people too," quietly returned Ormond. "I know many commercial houses in this city where a lad would not be engaged if it were known that he practised smoking. You see, the thing speaks for itself; it is a bad habit; and if one bad habit is formed in youth, a way becomes opened for the introduction of other bad habits. Drinking and doubtful company generally follow, in the case of youths. So that you are likely to be injured in your prospects by it, as well as in pocket and health. I only act as your friend in asking you to abandon the practice, and this, you know, Charlie, I have done before."

Charlie made no answer further than to shake his head, and make a slight move, as if wishful to cut short the conversation by going. George saw what he wanted, and speedily took the cue. Ormond saw it too, and said:

"However, lads, I don't want to lecture you or to scold you. I would rather appeal to your own sense of right. You are getting old enough to judge for yourselves, and I want you to choose voluntarily those things and those habits which "are excellent and of good report." Now is the time, you know, but as you seem in a hurry to get back, and I am busy too, I won't stay any longer. Only, one of these Sunday afternoons you must both go home with me, and take tea, so that we may spend a pleasant evening together. Good-bye, lads;" and he shook hands with each. Charlie Hobbs turned and looked after his teacher's retreating form with something very like a sneer. As he took out his cigar, and relighted it, he said:

"I guess it will be one while before he will catch me at

school another Sunday afternoon. What do you say, George? All that sort of thing will do very well for girls and children, but not for the likes of us. Bad habits, indeed! I wonder if he imagines that we are going to grow up spooneys and milksops."

"Very likely," replied George, as he looked ruefully at the hole in his pocket. He was thinking of the excuses he would have to make to his father, in order to account for the accident, seeing that smoking was an abomination to Mr. Smyth.

"If you're as willing as I am, we'll bid good-bye to Mr. Ormond Lee and all his belongings," said Charlie Hobbs, in that defiant, splenetic tone of his. That lad was George Smyth's evil genius, and though he knew it, the fascination of his company was so strong that he could not rid himself of the spell. "At any rate *I* shall, whether you do or no; but I suppose you will have to consult the old folks first, and I can guess what they will say. I don't, though; my governor knows better than to interfere with me or my doings. Just let me catch him saying, 'You shall do this thing, or you sha'n't do the other,' and see if there wouldn't be a blessed row."

George looked up at his companion with a sort of yearning for this wretched sort of liberty, in which Charlie Hobbs rejoiced, and wished that he could do as he liked too. Lads of this age always covet what they call "liberty," but too often it means only liberty to do evil. It is then, not liberty but *license*, for it acknowledges no law, human or divine. It is just at this period that restraints are cast off, rules violated, and morality thrown overboard; and if it were not for the power of prayer, wielded as it is sometimes, in earnest faith, by teacher or parent, there would be no hope at all for the wilful wanderers.

CHAPTER IX.

AN EVENING'S CHAT.

*'Beware! The tempter is ever at hand,
To whisper evil into thy ear.'*

"Don't be uneasy, Charlie. Now that you are here, try to make yourself as comfortable as you can. It is always a pleasure to me to see any of my boys; and as this is my own especial room, we shall not be interrupted."

It was a fine Sunday afternoon, some month or so after the conversation recorded in our last chapter. True to his determination, Charlie Hobbs had absented himself from school ever since that time—"for good," as he said—and had spent his time on the Sabbath in most questionable amusements. As a rule, I think it will generally be found that if a person scorns what is good, he turns for occupation to the active pursuit of evil. He cannot remain unemployed, and as the hymn says:

*"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."*

So Charlie found it, and unfortunately he liked the work now found for him to do. George Smyth still attended school, for although he sighed for the license which Charlie Hobbs enjoyed, Mr. Smyth was possessed of too much good sense, and sound paternal authority, to permit such a thing, and in obedience to home rule George had to attend as regularly as ever. Ormond had sent message after message to Charlie by means of George respecting his non-attendance, but in vain; and he was about to give up all thoughts of

influencing him any more, when, on this Sabbath afternoon, as he was returning with George Smyth, having secured his consent to accompanying him home for the purpose of spending the evening there, who should they meet but Charlie! Nothing daunted, Ormond instantly extended the invitation to him, and as George seconded him in it, it was accepted, although evidently with a strong reluctance. The fact was, George felt rather awkward at the idea of spending a whole evening in the company of his teacher, unsupported by any of his "chums," as he called them, and the opportunity of securing such a backer as Charlie was too good to be lost. As the result, the lads both accepted the invitation, and this was how it came to pass that they were both found in Ormond's room, awaiting the advent of tea.

But they were most wretchedly uncomfortable. You have heard of the uneasiness and restlessness of "cats on hot bricks," that is, if cats do really venture into such uncomfortable quarters; and these two lads were more like that than anything else. In the first place the room and its belongings were all too grand for them. The furniture and appointments of the place were all as much above their daily life as the usages and customs of civilized society would be to an Indian squaw; and as a consequence they sat upon the couch, whither Ormond had marshalled them, with much the same air with which they would have sat upon the mouth of a volcano. Indeed, I rather suspect that the latter place would have been the more agreeable of the two, if only for its danger; for neither of the lads was deficient in a sort of courage peculiar to themselves. But this awkwardness is a characteristic of some boys at this transitional period. In the streets, the playground, or in feats of daring and strength, they will do very well, because they are in their element, but in company or with visitors, amid the social

elegances of life, they are the most helpless leings imaginable. They will perch themselves on the edges of chairs, twirl their caps, bite their nails, and stare, or look sheepish, until you quite pity them for their too-evident discomfort and awkwardness. One of the most remarkable specimens of this class that I ever encountered was a college-student of high promise, about seventeen years of age. He was first in his class, and had there carried off several prizes, including one of fifty pounds, for a Latin essay, but one could not help noticing how utterly deficient he was in all the social amenities of such life. No wonder that youths vote going into society a "bore." No wonder that they deal only in monosyllables, and creep into the first quiet corner they can get, to lose the sense of their misery in the perusal of some interesting book.

Ormond could not help discerning the state of affairs, and having ordered tea as quickly as possible, found out some engravings and other things calculated to amuse the lads and draw them out. He wanted to break down the barrier of silence and reserve behind which they were evidently entrenching themselves, and anything which would put them on good terms with themselves, as well as with him, was not to be despised. Now most people like to see and read of foreign climes, and Charlie and George were no exception to the general rule. Half an hour quickly passed away in the examination of these pictures, and by the time tea was brought in the three were chatting together as pleasantly and as interestedly as could be imagined. Ormond had travelled somewhat on the Continent, and his comments and information, added to the representations of the scenes, helped to do wonders. As a *finale* tea was despatched amid a conversation on pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Tea was over. and now came the tug of war. Ormond

knew the precise object he had in his mind in inviting the lads there, but how to introduce conversation of this kind he could scarcely tell. If there is anything boys hate it is *preaching*—I mean that style of preaching which talks at them in a scolding, fault-finding sort of fashion. You are certain to alienate the attention and affection of youths if you begin in this way, and Ormond was wise enough to know this. Fortunately for his purpose, however, an interesting memoir of Dr. Kitto lay upon the table, and as George Smyth was looking over it Ormond volunteered to give them a brief history of his career. He pictured out to them the early struggles and hardships of Kitto's life, as well as his indomitable thirst for reading and self-improvement. His wonderful perseverance, amid illness, deafness, poverty, and workhouse toil, was delineated to the boys in simple but forcible language, and as Ormond proceeded to crown all with the story of success and fame, Charlie's eyes sparkled with delight, and George listened with open-mouthed wonder. The lads could appreciate what was excellent and noble in Kitto. Said George, as he looked across at Charlie confidentially:

"I say! if we could only do like that!"

"Ah!" and Charlie's face assumed a thoughtful aspect, not often to be seen on his features. "But we can't, George. It's no go."

"Why not?" questioned Ormond. "Are not your abilities and opportunities as good as Kitto's?"

"Yes, that may be," replied Charlie hesitatingly, "but there are other things you know nothing about. We lads have to put up with a great deal in our office, and anybody who seems to be good only gets laughed at."

"And do you mind their laughing at you?" inquired Ormond.

"Mind it! I should think we did! It isn't very pleasant to be sent to Coventry by one's mates, is it? And that's how it would be if we weren't to run with the stream. You see the fellows like manliness, and a boy soon gets the name of 'spooney' if he doesn't mind."

"And," said George Smyth, looking as if he were uttering some very important truth, "you might as well be out of the nation as out of the fashion."

"But if the fashion be a bad one, how then? Do you consider yourselves bound to follow it? Do you never ask yourselves first, whether a certain habit be a bad one or no?" Ormond was getting at the point now, but it required great caution. One false step might forfeit all the ground he had gained.

"Oh! we never stop to think of that," returned Charlie. "And beside, if you were to hear the fellows talk in our office, you would think that black was white pretty soon. They put it pretty strong sometimes, I can tell you."

"They do that," coincided George. "You can't help agreeing with them."

"Why, you should just hear Sam Elkington, and Edwards, and some of the others, talk about the Bible. They say that it's a big sham, all of it, and as for parsons, why, according to them, they are all hypocrites."

"And what else do they say?"

"Why, among the rest, they read from books which tell us that when we die there's an end of us. And you know, if that's true, the Bible can't be true." Charlie looked as if he had settled the question now.

"And," added George, "if the Bible isn't true, I don't see that it matters much what we do. We might as well enjoy ourselves, and have a merry life, as a dull one."

"Just so," returned Ormond. "It is the old sophistry,

'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' only, as it happened, the men who said that were Pagans, and you and your office-mates are, nominally at least, Christians. But then, you see, you have to get rid of an inexorable *if*. You say *if* the Bible be not true, then certain conclusions must follow. But, my dear boys, the Bible *is* true, and so your false reasoning falls to the ground. You are not the first couple of young lads who have been deluded by infidel arguments into the broad way of error and sin; but let me tell you that though for ages infidels and blasphemers have tried to do away with the Bible, they have never succeeded. From the days of the Emperor Julian, who dared God to his very face as it were, down to Voltaire, who used great abilities to oppose a belief in Christianity—attempts have not ceased to turn the word of God into a lie, or to explain it away as a silly fable. But the attempts have been all in vain; and those who are so impious and daring as to defy God and his word will find that they are only, like Saul of old, 'kicking against the pricks.' When the mountain of misery that they have been piling up falls upon them it will 'grind them to powder.'

"I don't wonder," Ormond continued, "at your habits and pursuits if you have been instructed in this kind of thing. I am only surprised that you have not plunged deeper into vice and folly. But so surely as you see the blue heavens above you, and the beautiful earth beneath you, so surely did God make them, and so surely did he make you. From you, therefore, he will demand an account of your lives as his reasonable creatures, and could you dare to say to him what you have advanced to me, by way of excuse for not doing his will? How would Sam Elkington's infidel nonsense sound at the judgment-bar?"

Much more than this passed on both sides, for Ormond

was thoroughly alive to the fearful dangers which surrounded the lads, and strove with all his might to combat their miserable errors. When the boys said "Good-bye," that night, they went away more thoughtful and quiet than they had been for a long time.

CHAPTER X.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

It was time that Ormond should hear from America. Mr. Osborne had promised to send back particulars of how things were going with him and his in the New World, and Ernest had engaged privately with his teacher to do the same, but no tidings had as yet come to hand. It was a pleasant surprise, therefore, when among his letters one morning he found a foreign missive, which, on examination, proved to be from Ernest Osborne, headed "New York." It was written in true boyish style, but shrewd and thoughtful withal; and, just as it was, I will give it to you. Ernest was a keen observer, as you will see.

"My dear Teacher,—Please to forgive me for not writing sooner, but I should have done so if I had had time. I have thought of you, and all the Sunday-school boys, a great many times, and I should like to take a peep into the school just now very much. I wish I had paid more attention when I was there: I sometimes think I caused you lots of trouble, but I wouldn't do it now, teacher, if I was home again. But I must tell you something about our voyage, and how we have got on since we reached here.

“We had a very good voyage, the captain said he never knew a better one, and in twelve days from the time we left Liverpool we were in New York harbour. Oh! teacher, it was beautiful to watch the land drawing nearer and nearer, as we looked. First it was like a belt of thin blue mist, ever so far off at sea, then gradually we saw ships and buildings, but a great way off, and by-and-by we reached Castle Gardens. Before we landed I had time enough to notice the different ships as they lay at anchor there, and from their flags I should think that there must be some from every country in the world. I believe that I saw some ships that I have noticed in our docks at home; you know, teacher, I must call Liverpool ‘home,’ for New York isn’t one bit like home, though I like it well enough. When we landed at Castle Gardens a nice sort of man met with us, and gave us all a Testament apiece. I don’t know if he thought we were heathens; but as the Bible distributor seemed to treat us respectfully, and offered to direct us to lodgings, I didn’t like to tell him that I had one already. But I’ve got the one you gave me, and I’m going to keep it too, in memory of my Sunday-school days at home.

“Well, we got to some lodgings, rather expensive, mother said, but pretty fair, considering, and there we stayed a day or so while father looked about for uncle. You see, uncle understood that we were coming in the next ship, and on that account he was not there to meet us. But he *was* glad to see us, when he found we were come, and insisted on our leaving the lodgings at once, and coming to his house. So we did, for it was more than father could manage, to keep on paying for accommodation, and Yankees know how to charge, and no mistake. They are very proud of being thought ‘cute’ and ‘smart,’ as they call it; it needs all one’s pluck to be up to them.

"Uncle has a very good place in a large book and Bible warehouse, and hoped, as he said, to have got father a situation there too. But he couldn't, though he has the promise of the next vacancy for a clerk. In the meantime, father has a situation in another office, and is doing very well. I don't think he would do much better if he had the clerk's place at the warehouse. But as it turned out, they wanted a warehouse-boy, and uncle asked for the place for me. They seemed to think all the better of me for being an English boy and a Sunday scholar, and they took me on at once, giving me three dollars a week to begin with, and my daily board.

"I like my situation first-rate; and I am getting acquainted, as fast as possible, with the ins and outs of New York. I have to unpack great parcels of books, and count them over, before they are put for sale. Then I have to pack up and deliver small parcels part of the day, and to keep watch at the warehouse at meal times. I never find it dull, even then, for I can get a peep into the newest books and magazines, and in this way I find out a good deal that I should not learn otherwise. I have the prospect of rising, if I keep a good character and remain steady: and this I mean to do, for I haven't forgot yet what we used to talk about in the dear old class at home.

"I don't go anywhere to Sunday-school yet, but I mean to pretty soon. Father and mother are not quite settled yet as to going to church—they call all the chapels, churches, here—and so I mean to wait until then. But my Sundays will not be happy unless I go to school as I did at home.

"I mustn't forget to tell you, teacher, before I close, that I have every prospect of promotion. I heard the senior partner tell our head-clerk yesterday that 'that little English lad must have a better berth soon.' He meant me; and as

I went home in the evening with the news, I didn't know whether I stood on my head or my heels. America is a fine country for anybody that tries to get on. I believe everybody can succeed here, if they are only 'smart,' as the Americans say. They don't think much of any one who is not 'smart'—but if one takes care, one needn't be hurt in this way. Some of them used to think that I was 'green,' because I was young and quiet; but they found their mistake out very soon. Our young warehousemen know me pretty well by this time, and have done playing their tricks. But I must now finish; only father tells me not to forget to thank you very much for your kindness in helping us out, for, as he says, if it hadn't been for you, we couldn't have come. He doesn't forget it, and very soon he will repay all that he owes you. Mother and all the little ones are pretty well. Good-bye, teacher. Please don't forget to write to me once now and then. So no more at present from your affectionate scholar.

“ERNEST OSBORNE”

You may depend on it that Ormond was not long before he wrote back to Ernest a letter full of good advice and wise counsel. As he had foreseen, there was the danger of contracting unsettled habits and roving tendencies, amid the many new anxieties, pursuits, cares, and scenes which emigration to a strange land always involves. Many a one who has always kept the ordinances of the Sabbath in his native home, and has attended with punctuality to the religious duties which devolved upon him there, has learned, amid the din of business and the rush of new pursuits in a new home, to forget all about religion, to turn the Sabbath into a day for sightseeing and folly.

It was not done in vain. The second communication

from the Osbornes not only enclosed the money wherewith to defray Ormond's claim against them, but conveyed the satisfactory intelligence that the whole family were in the habit of attending public worship regularly; and that Ernest had accepted the charge of a small infant class in the school connected with it. This news, I may truthfully say, gladdened Ormond's heart more by far than the remittance possibly could. It was one evidence that his labours had not been in vain.

But if he had something to cheer him, there were other circumstances calculated to depress him. George Smyth and Charlie Hobbs had bidden "good-bye" to the Sunday-school altogether, though, for that matter, Charlie had virtually done so long before, and George's attendance had been shamefully irregular. He, however, was but an exemplification of the text that "evil communications corrupt good manners." Had it not been for Charlie Hobbs' evil counsels and more evil example, George would still have remained in the class, and his easy yielding disposition might have been at least restrained from open sin. But they were gone, and in their room he had of course to accept new lads, and so far as in him lay he strove to do his duty by them. Hugh Blake, Harry Gilfillan, and Edward Telford still remained under his charge, and not only to them, but to the strayed ones, was his good-will and friendship ever shown. He could follow those who were far away, such as Herbert Wilson and Ernest Osborne, with prayer and wise counsel, while George Smyth and Charlie Hobbs were often reminded of his watchfulness in a way they little liked, when in the midst of doubtful and debasing pleasures. A friendly tap on the shoulder, or a warning shake of the head sometimes saluted them at the entrance to some dancing-saloon or drinking bar, and how-

ever their dignity might resent the interference, they were not yet hardened enough to reject and condemn such true and disinterested friendship. I think a boy or a girl must be very far gone in sin and folly if he or she can coolly despise such solicitude as this; there is something so Christ-like in it. And if the teacher has to weep in secret over those whom he can neither restrain nor influence any longer, he only treads in the steps of the Great Teacher, who wept over the doomed city Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XI.

BREAKERS AHEAD.

BETTING was an accomplishment which Charlie Hobbs speedily attained to, and all the more so that horse-racing and kindred sports were viewed by him with special interest. He had more than once laid money on a favourite horse at the Derby, and, unfortunately for himself, had won! I say unfortunately, because from that time a passion for racing and betting had been developed, which promised to bear most unhappy fruit at no very distant day. In these pursuits he was not alone; others of the office-lads had joined him from time to time in the bets, and latterly George Smyth had borne him company, fancying, on the strength of a small weekly allowance of pocket-money, that he could accomplish almost everything, in a pecuniary sense. And so Charlie and he had bet upon the forthcoming Derby to an amount which was totally out of their power to defray in case fortune went against them.

The eve of the Derby drew nigh, and George's heart was troubled within him. Not that he feared his loss so much; it was rather the sense of wrong-doing which weighed so heavily upon his mind, and the knowledge that his father would certainly have interfered to prevent the bet being accepted, had he known the circumstance. But George had carefully kept the secret to himself, amid all his uneasiness, and resolved that when once out of this affair he would wash his hands clean of all such engagements. Many another has done the same, and then has found, when too late to reform, that the fascination of evil-doing has been too much for their resolutions. As for Charlie, his conscience was quite at ease; more, he was merry as a lark over the matter; it was "quite the thing," and they would be sure to win, so that fear and anxiety were thoroughly superfluous feelings. He assured George over and over again that he knew from the best authorities that it must pay; they had selected the right horse, and that in all probability they would pocket twenty pounds by the transaction. And when George rather mutely shook his head, and shoved his hands in his pockets, recalling vainly the memory of the five pounds they had risked, Charlie only whistled contemptuously at his "want of pluck." But, somehow, the world and its vices wore such an attractive appearance to Charlie that he scorned at the idea of either pain or loss underlying them. Everything was *couleur de rose*; and so I think it always is, when a sanguine, high-spirited youth first enters on a career of folly.

With the next sun the eventful day dawned, and the *habitués* of betting circles were all alive to know the various issues on which they had staked their money. Among these you may be sure that our two lads were neither last nor least, though the facts were carefully hidden from their superiors

in the office and counting-house, for indeed it was a gross breach of rules for any of the employes to be concerned in any betting transactions. By-and-by telegrams began to arrive, and even those who had no stake in the matter scanned them eagerly and excitedly. But the sole question which agitated the minds of the two was, "Has Duke won?" Another two hours must elapse before they could possibly know, and meanwhile the hands were dismissed for a little refreshment, seeing that they would have to labour far into the night. As it happened to be George's usual time for tea, Charlie joined him just as he was leaving the counting-house.

"I say, old fellow, we've to be hard at it most of the night. We're let off for an hour or so now, till we get in the next telegrams."

"When do you expect them?"

"In about a couple of hours. We shall know then how Duke stands."

"Hang it!" said George; "it's miserable waiting. I say, I'm sick of it."

"Bosh! George! you are too soft and spooney. It'll come all right, there's no doubt."

"I only hope it will."

"But it *will*, I tell you. Here you've been worrying my life, and your own, for days past, over this paltry sum, when there's not the least need of it. You always meet trouble half a mile off. Wait till trouble comes, that's my motto."

"But then," urged George Smyth, "what worries me, is the thought of how we shall pay our money if we lose."

"Lose! we can't lose, I tell you. And even if we do I know how to get out of the bother," said Charlie.

"What, and pay the money?"

"Yes, and pay the money. I never saw such a fellow as you are for making a fool of yourself. I suppose that the next thing will be to go and blab to all of them about it," said Charlie tauntingly.

"No, I don't mean to do that; but I don't think I shall ever be mixed up again with such things. I'm too miserable over it."

"How now! Mr. Propriety! I suppose next you will be telling the governors at the office, in order to ease your conscience, and so save your own place at the expense of mine."

"I shall do no such thing, Charlie, I tell you; all that worries me is the thought of how to get the money we shall have to pay in case we lose. I can get none at home, I know."

"Leave that to me," replied Charlie significantly; "I'll manage that right enough." And here the lads parted, taking each the route to their respective homes.

Time passed on, and the two lads had not long been back at the office before the long-looked-for news arrived. Another horse had won, and "Duke," the much vaunted racer, on whose powers the two lads had staked, was, in racing parlance, "nowhere." It had not even come in third or fourth. Charlie stood like one stunned at this piece of intelligence, for he knew what that intelligence meant to him and George Smyth. It meant loss, misery, dishonesty, and possibly detection, shame, and a prison. It meant just this, that in order to meet the debt they must resort to dishonest means, and risk all chances of detection, to get out of the net into which they had fallen. As he turned to arrange his "pie" previous to setting up fresh type, his hands shook, and his heart beat with tremulous excitement, while his tongue was parched in his mouth, as he contemplated the

"mess" he had got into. But just at this juncture a can of beer was handed round, intended to refresh those who had to work late, and after Charlie had taken a drink a good part of his old bravado returned. As he followed his task his mind dwelt on the problem which awaited him and George, and by the time the office was closed he had laid his plan of operations so carefully, that he felt sure detection would not ensue.

Next morning who should call him up but George Smyth! White enough he looked, seeing that most of the hours which should have been devoted to slumber had been spent in restless tossing to and fro, his dull wits seeing no way of escape. And in his extremity he had come to Charlie for counsel and help. Charlie was dull at heart too, it must be confessed, but as he saw George he put on a cheerful, confident look, as became him, tempter that he was.

"Just as I thought, you see, Charlie," was George's first greeting. "And we are in for it."

"Nonsense!" replied Charlie. "We can get out of it right enough. It only needs a little cleverness on your part."

"Cleverness on my part!" echoed George; "why, what do you mean?"

"There, you needn't look so scared about it, nor shout quite so loud. Why, don't you keep the petty cash-book? And don't you pay little things sometimes?"

"Yes, but what of that?"

"What of that? Why, don't you see? I will scrape up all I can, and you must do the same. Then you must take enough to meet the deficiency. If you are clever, and leave the key about carelessly for a few hours, so that it shall be found by the head-clerk, it will be put down at once that

the money is lost somehow or other. You must say so, you know, and stick to it: it won't be a lie anyhow, seeing that the money is really lost, worse luck!"

"Then you want me to turn thief, do you?" said George Smyth, as he looked into his companion's face with something very like dismay. "A nice proposition certainly! Why don't you do it yourself, seeing that you led me into the scrape?"

"All very well, my good fellow," replied Charlie Hobbs plausibly; "if I occupied the position that you do I would take it in a minute and risk everything, so that I could but shield a friend from disgrace. I'd risk all about detection, and swear that black was white, sooner than be found out. But then, you see, I can't do it. If types and paper were pounds, shillings, and pence, I might, but not else."

"I've never been a thief yet," said George Smyth, "and I can't bear the idea of beginning now. Why, I should be just ruined for life if it became known."

"But it needn't be known, I tell you, if you're clever at it, and do as I tell you. And beside, it isn't exactly stealing, for you know you can just borrow it on the quiet, as it were, and we'll pay it back again some time or other. That's only borrowing, you know, old fellow."

"But how much would you pay back if I did it?" said George.

The idea of borrowing the cash for a time was not so repulsive as was the suggestion of stealing.

"Half of it, honour bright," replied Charlie. "Come, now, for this once, help yourself and me out of this confounded scrape. I'll never ask you again."

George looked puzzled and was silent. His tempter saw what ground he had gained, and went on again.

"Beside, see what a fix you're in yourself. How will you

get out of it, unless you do what I tell you? You know you mustn't ask your father for money."

"Oh, no! I daren't do that. I only wish I hadn't listened to you now."

"Nonsense, George! You may get us both out of the scrape and not a soul be the wiser, if you only choose. And beside that, we can pay it back very soon if we both save."

George yielded. The necessary amount was abstracted from the petty cash-box, according to the method suggested, and the act was not found out. And although George was afraid of his own shadow for a long time afterwards, fearing detection, Charlie was as bold and as daring as it was possible to be. Need I say, that what was paid back into the cash-box all came from George? Not one penny was ever paid by Charlie, nor one hour's anxiety incurred thereby. He was far gone in the road to ruin.

CHAPTER XII.

A STUDENT'S ASPIRATIONS.

"I waste no more in idle dreams my life, my soul away;
I wake to know my better self,—I wake to watch and pray;
Thought, feeling, time, on idols vain, I've lavished all too long;
Henceforth to holier purposes I pledge myself, my song."

"A MINISTER, Edward! Do you know what a high and sacred office you are aspiring to?"

"Yes; I have weighed it well. I hope I am not prompted by worldly ambition, or, indeed, any earthly motive: I don't think I am. But such is my earnest wish."

"And how long have you felt a desire for the work of the ministry?"

"Almost ever since I was a child. I can scarcely remember the time when I had not a yearning, however feeble and childish, for this great work. And before I knew how to pray with the heart I used to ask God to make me a minister or a missionary. It is not a recent impulse, teacher."

"But of course you are willing to do as God will, by his providence, direct."

"Yes, perfectly willing; but work for Him I must. I cannot remain idle, and the ministerial work has been for many years a longing with me."

The speaker was Edward Telford, the earnest, thoughtful, delicate lad of whom we have before spoken. He had, as the first-fruits of Ormond's labours, united himself with the church, in solemn fellowship, some time previous to this. It should have been done before, seeing that for some time Edward had chosen the "better part," but a shrinking timidity, and fears of proving unfaithful, had kept him back. But at length he summoned the necessary courage to profess himself a disciple, and from that time the lad had been marked as a single-minded, earnest Christian youth. Following out his old habit of confiding in his teacher, he told him all his yearnings, and specially the one of which we now speak. His position in life was good, comparatively speaking, so that he would gain nothing by entering the ministerial vocation, in a pecuniary point of view. The business for which he was destined would bring him far more income than he would obtain by means of preaching, so that it was clear to Ormond that he sought the office from no mercenary motive.

"Then I will not discourage you, Edward," replied Ormond. "I would rather help you forward. If you are obeying a

high and holy impulse, don't turn aside for any lesser attraction. But are you making any preparation for it? How are you getting on with your studies?"

"As well as I can alone, teacher. You know I am employed all day in business, so that I have only the evenings really to call my own. But these I am trying to improve. I commenced Latin before I left school, and that I am following up now. Then about twice a week I take a little Greek, and one evening a week, Euclid."

"That is hard work. You must have little time for general reading or recreation."

"That I don't mind, so that I get on with my studies."

"But you must need help sometimes. How do you manage with difficulties?"

"Well, sometimes I wait until I have learned a little more on that subject; and then, when I have increased light, I solve them myself; but others I have left for a little time, until I find a friend to help me. Could you help me, teacher?"

"Yes, my boy, gladly; you should have come before. Any help that I can give you is at your service; and any books likely to be useful to you, which you can find in my library, take, and welcome, for as long as you like."

"Many thanks, teacher. I have wanted to ask you for a long time past, but did not like. I would rather plod on by myself a hundred times than trouble anybody else."

"That spirit is good, so far as it goes; but you should not refrain from asking help when you need it. Few young students have accomplished much, wholly unaided; and in your studies you will especially need oversight and direction."

"I'll come to you now, teacher," replied Edward.

"By all means. And what do you intend to do about college? Of course you look forward to that ultimately? Have you mentioned the matter to any one?"

"No, sir. My father would much prefer my continuing in trade, but there are younger boys who are coming on to take my place; and my mother helps me to push on with my studies. I will remain at home as long as I am actually needed, and then I shall look out for my own chance. I always loved books, as you know, teacher; and many a night after I have gone to my own room, and the others have been sound asleep, I have remained up till one, two, or three o'clock, reading or studying. I could not be happy were I condemned to trade all my life. Besides that, the longing I have for active service in God's vineyard is so strong, and has been for many years, that I shall never be satisfied until I am there. Is the feeling wrong, do you think, teacher?"

"No, Edward; it cannot be wrong. It must be implanted in your mind by a higher power, and I would recommend you not to stifle the aspiration. But as you are so hard at work, it is only right and fair that you should get all the assistance possible. Tuesday evenings generally are quiet evenings with me. I could receive you at home for a couple of hours' instruction and supervision, if you could manage to come. There are subjects you could study better in company, and those we will go over together. I have not yet forgotten my Latin and Greek; but if I had, I would soon brighten them up again for your sake."

"Thank you, teacher," said Edward, his face beaming with gratitude, and his eyes sparkling as they had not done for many a day. "Your help will be worth more than I can tell, to me; and it shall not be my fault if I don't profit by it. I want to work *hard* for a time, so as to make sure of my footing before I apply for entrance to any college; beside which, these studies will train me to 'endure hardness' in one way, before I really go to college. I don't

want to be self-deceived, nor to deceive others. I would go back to the shopkeeping to-morrow for my life's work if I were not really actuated by pure, earnest motives."

Edward Telford was right in his extreme conscientiousness respecting his aspiring to the work of the ministry, as well as that of preparation for it. It is wrong to rush unadvisedly into the vineyard, if not sent, or if not specially qualified for the work. Some do so rush into it, and the result is most disastrous both to themselves, and their hearers, as well as damaging to the cause they espouse. One young man of this stamp, a basket-maker by trade, once upon a time applied to a committee of ministers for aid and acceptance in the matter of entering college, in order to be enabled to study for the ministry. After serious and prayerful consideration, the senior minister of the committee called on him, and thus addressed him: "Young friend, we have carefully examined your qualifications and character. We believe that God requires his servants to labour in different stations. Some he calls to the work of the ministry, and some to make baskets; and we are of the unanimous opinion that he calls you to serve him by making baskets."

On the following evening the teacher and Edward Telford might have been seen bending over the Greek lexicon in Ormond's own room, and for two hours they were hard at it. It might have been somewhat irksome to Ormond thus to go over studies now long laid aside, but if it was, he caught inspiration from the pale-faced earnest youth digging away so patiently among Greek roots and verbs, sustained only by the hope of qualifying himself for future good. And as Ormond helped him, casting what light he could on knotty questions and puzzling exercises, he was astonished to find what quaint original ideas the lad threw

out from time to time. It seemed as if that quiet, old-fashioned, shrewd face of his was, but the index to a mind prematurely thoughtful and well-informed, for he had picked up a bit here and a bit there, until there was scarcely a subject about which he could not say something. Mark you, it was only a *little* of everything that he knew, but that little showed the boy's capabilities. What might he not do if the whole fountain of learning were opened to him, so that he might drink to the fill? Ormond had no doubt of the lad's fitness for the vocation he had chosen, and as his knowledge of him grew, his esteem grew also, until he regarded him more in the light of a brother than a scholar; and not only his time, but his means also, were put at Edward's service, for the securing of suitable books. It would have been a sin to have kept such a lad back, and although his rare conscientiousness and untiring industry would have been valuable in any business career, evidently his vocation was something very different to shopkeeping.

I should have mentioned that Mr. Telford allowed Edward a small sum weekly for his own private expenditure, and regularly this was brought to Ormond to form the nucleus of a fund for defraying his college expenses, whenever that good time should come. And Ormond did more than merely save it for him. For every shilling Edward so laid up, another was added, for was it not laid up for a sacred purpose? Ormond did this in faith; nothing doubting he would some day receive compound interest for it, according to the rate which obtains in heaven, though not on earth. Does not the Divine Teacher say: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my little ones, ye did it unto me!"

CHAPTER XIII.

ON BOARD A MAN-OF-WAR.

THE *Penelope* was lying off Portsmouth, and Herbert Wilson took advantage of the opportunity to write long letters both to his parents and teacher. Mrs. Wilson read hers again and again, with deep motherly interest, and only wished she could see the writer, if but for one short hour, in which wish she was cordially joined by Sam. As it fortunately happened, Ormond was compelled, by the calls of business, to take a hurried journey to the metropolis, and when there it was not much for him to take a run down to Portsmouth. It was with unfeigned delight that Herbert was ordered up one morning to see his old teacher, in obedience to Ormond's request. The lad came forward opening his eyes in amazement, never dreaming that such a pleasant surprise could be in store for him. As far as he knew Ormond was hundreds of miles away, calmly pursuing the even tenor of his life,—when lo! he turned up in the very training-ship in which Herbert was domiciled.

"Teacher! Is it really you?" said the lad, as soon as he could find his tongue. "I didn't think this."

"I suppose you didn't, but I made up my mind to visit you on the first opportunity, as soon as you started off. And now, quite unexpectedly, the chance has come, so here I am. How are you getting on?"

"Oh, first-rate! I like the life here: it's free and healthy. Of course we've got to mind and do our duty, or else we get punished; but if we like we can get on all right."

"And are you happy here?"

"Yes, sir. I'm on my own hook, you see, and so, in a way of speaking, I'm independent. Not but that I should like to peep in upon them at home sometimes. Are they all well there? Father writes me pretty often, but it isn't like seeing them, you know, teacher."

Herbert had not forgotten the old familiar title, and it came out now more naturally than ever. As he spoke the word, Ormond could see the tide of recollection rushing over him. Doubtless he recalled those dear old times when he used to sit in the class, and mingle in its exercises. Now all was changed, and he could never go back to the old life with all its endearing associations; he must live in the stern, cold present. Ah, me! we have all felt such vain regrets at some time or other, as we have recalled the days that are gone—have we not? The youth looks back to the season of childhood; the man of business sighs for the time of his early manhood; the old man dreams over his former business days; and we one and all sigh for the happiness and the innocent light-heartedness which dwelt in that lost past, knowing but too surely that it will never come again.

"No, it isn't, my boy; but come here and tell me all about your leaving home in so sudden a way. I can't understand why you did it. I suppose we may sit down here," and he pointed to a large coil of rope. Ormond wanted to get out of earshot of the sentry, who was pacing up and down very near them. Then there were officers of different grades flitting about here and there, or scanning the offing with their glasses, while every now and then a number of the lads in training were called up for exercise. The vessel seemed to teem with all the evidence of busy life; everybody was engaged in some duty or other, and really there seemed no chance of a quiet nook wherein

to hold a long, confidential chat. It was a huge triumph of human ingenuity and greatness, was that ship, but it had not, for any one out of all the hundreds on board her, the sacred retirement of a home.

"Yes, teacher; nobody'll say anything; and I'm off duty for another hour, so I shall not be wanted. Well, I've wished many a time since that I hadn't run away. I wouldn't do it again for anything, because I had to tell lies every mile of the way so as to carry my point, and sometimes I look back upon them with a kind of uneasy feeling. Then before I could enter here I had to tell more lies—jolly big ones too—about my age, my parents' consent, and so on. Well, you know, teacher, a fellow must be rather hardened if he doesn't think of that sometimes when he's lying of a night in his hammock, and especially if it's a bit rough. I did very often, and I know I wouldn't do it again."

"I'm very glad that your conscience isn't so hardened but that you can recognize the sin of which you have been guilty. It would be a poor sign, Herbert, if you were not miserable sometimes. But how did you come to run away? What made you so determined?"

"Because I wanted to go to sea long before. Many and many's the time I'd asked father to send me, and only got a cuff on the side of the head in return. I used to stand and watch the ships going out of port, and longed to go with them, out of the dirty, dusty city. And as it seemed so much grander, you know, to belong to Her Majesty's navy, I made up my mind that I would enter it. I was planning and scheming a long time before I started. It wasn't always pleasant at home; I think big brothers are almost always in the way when there's little ones about. Girls are handy, you see, and can make themselves useful, and so

they're wanted more, but boys are in everybody's way. At least, that's how I found it, and so I thought I'd clear out. Then besides that, if I got into any scrapes, it was always made the worst of because there was no excuse for me, and so I thought I might as well leave it. That's about the long and the short of it, how I came to run away. I'd no business to do it, but it wasn't altogether my fault."

The lad felt that the sweetest quality of home-life—that which I may term the *homeliness of home*—existed not for him. Such a lack is one of the bitterest that a growing youth or young girl can experience. It contributes very often to the driving of them out on the world, mere waifs and strays of humanity, when they ought to be filling useful and honourable posts. These children are more sinned against than sinning if they do go astray; and in such cases those who have had the training and responsibility of them have much more to answer for than they dream of. The spell of a pure, happy home is one which never loses its power through all the after life: it is like the anchor, which, firmly fixed beneath the surging waters, keeps the vessel from going hopelessly adrift on the rocks and shoals of temptation. Herbert Wilson's home was a specimen of too many of its class.

"Well, I wish you hadn't run away. I must confess that I was somewhat disappointed in you, but since you are here I hope you will reflect credit on your calling. You can serve Christ as well in a Jack Tar's position as any other way, you know, if you have only his help."

Herbert rested his chin on his hands, as if in contemplation of this last piece of counsel. He looked puzzled and worried, just as a lad does look when you probe him with very searching and unwelcome truths. *He* serve Christ on board the *Penelope*! He didn't see how at all.

"I don't know, teacher. You see we ain't Sunday-school boys; and if a fellow said his prayers, or read his Bible, he'd get fine tricks played off upon him. Why, if *you* were to attempt to read your Bible down below, you'd have to keep your weather eye open, leave alone me. Jack Tars don't care much for that sort of thing."

"But do you mean to say that you never pray? Have you outgrown the need of all that?"

"Well, teacher, I'll just tell you how I felt here when I came first, and then you'll see. I came with a lot of strange, fresh lads, and our hammocks were side by side, pretty near to each other. It was a wretched dim light that we had—only two big lanterns for the whole lot of us—and I fancied I could just kneel down and say the Lord's Prayer, as I used to do at home, however much hurried I was. But within a minute after I did so, two or three caps came slinging at me, and I was ordered to let all that alone; and more, I was promised a 'jolly treat' if I didn't. Well, after that I thought I could say over my prayers after I got into my hammock, and so be observed by nobody, but it didn't last long. Sometimes I was so tired that I was hardly laid down before my eyes were shut, and I knew nothing more until summoned up to scrub decks in the morning. And so I gradually got out of the way of it. I think if anybody wants to serve Christ, he mustn't become a Jack Tar."

"But surely you haven't forgotten all the teaching of the Sabbath-school. You *must* remember something of it though you are ashamed to act it out?"

"Oh no! I haven't forgotten it at all. I shall never forget the first storm I was in. The winds blew and the waters roared, until I felt thoroughly afraid we should all go to the bottom before morning. Some of the other

fellows laughed at me, but I was a green hand then, and I suppose I showed my fear. Well, the storm lasted six or eight hours, and all the time this hymn, 'Jesus, refuge of my soul,' was running through my mind. I shook with fear as it was, but if it hadn't been for the remembrance of that hymn I don't know what I should have done. Don't you remember, teacher, my learning it, to repeat to you? I think it was about the only hymn that I ever learned right off."

It was small fruit this, as the result of his labours, but Ormond was grateful that it was so much. It might be the germ and promise of something more. Herbert's time was almost up, but as he wished to show his visitor over the ship, the two rose, and having obtained the requisite permission, the lad escorted Ormond from stem to stern. It added no little dignity to the young sailor-boy, in the eyes of his companions, to be enabled to say that this gentlemanly visitor had come so many hundred miles, almost purposely to see him, and Herbert felt a real pride in showing Ormond over the vessel which was for the time part of his life. Probably Ormond would not see him again for some years, as his period of training was almost over, and after that he would be sent to some foreign station. I think it was with real regret that Herbert said "Good-bye," for a big tear glistened in his eye, and he remained watching the tiny boat in which his friend took his departure as long as it could be distinguished. If he had done wrong, he felt then more bitterly than ever that he must bear its results. The experience a lad gets in the navy is somewhat stern; the lessons are severe; but it is not a bad school for a healthy, wilful, wayward lad.

CHAPTER XIV.

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.

‘WHAT is the meaning of it?’

“I can’t tell. I am as completely in the dark as yourself. Have we, do you think, any reason to suspect the clerks?”

“Can’t say. It’s very worrying, because in cases of this kind one is afraid to suspect or charge any one person with the crime, for fear of injuring the innocent. But that one rascal is in our employ, is plain enough.”

“It is not only stealing, but forgery. You see the cheque was made payable to you in the name of the firm. And the bank people are as much at fault as we are.”

“Yes. The only explanation they can give is this—a young fellow who represented himself as one of our employés presented the cheque for cashing, saying that I had sent him with it. As I told them, they had no business to have cashed it on such a representation; if they had only sent a line to me I could have stopped it in the beginning. The cashier’s wits were wool-gathering just then I suppose.”

“It’s no credit to him that they should have been. I’ve no patience with people who take things for granted. My maxim is to suspect a man till I prove him to be honest. But we must take some steps to discover the thief. How would it be to put the matter into the hands of a detective?”

“I wouldn’t just yet, for a day or two. Let us keep our eyes open, and examine the desks of the clerks. Blotting-

paper will tell tales sometimes; and we may obtain the right clue if we make no fuss."

"So be it, then. But remember, whoever is the offender shall be made an example of. Such a crime must not go unpunished, for the sake of the rest. If it once leak out that we condone theft and forgery, there is no knowing where the mischief will end."

The speakers were two gentlemen—partners in the printing and publishing firm of Dudley and Hope. Mr. Hope was the younger of the two, and the one to whom the cheque had been made payable by the forger. Mr. Dudley was a sterner sort of man, more decisive and abrupt. Perhaps a longer intercourse with the world had contributed to this, for one's heart does not get softer, but harder, the more one mixes with mankind. His hair was of that colour known as iron-grey, and his deep, piercing eyes were surmounted by heavy, shaggy eyebrows, which knitted most ominously when any rascality or deception came beneath their view. Mr. Dudley was a keen worshipper of Justice, and while not wronging any one of a farthing, would visit with merciless severity those who sinned against him. Mr. Hope was more lenient, perhaps too much so; at any rate Mr. Dudley said that he was, and his suggestions of leniency with regard to the forged cheque had been civilly but firmly disposed of. Mr. Hope was slow to suspect anybody, long in forming a conclusion, and very careful of personal reputation; while on the contrary, Mr. Dudley was quick in suspicion, unmerciful in judgment, and prompt in punishment. It was somewhat strange that two gentlemen of such opposite tendencies and characteristics should have been for so many years in such a close connection, but they had been, and were, moreover, successful business men. At the time of which I am writing they were in the private

office—a little room opening from the outer office, and used only by the principals. The matter over which they were puzzling themselves was to be explained by the presence of that little slip of pink paper purporting to be drawn by the firm in favour of Mr. Hope, but the filling-up and signature were both fictitious, and as it lay on the green-baize-covered table, the eyes of both partners rested on it in the direst perplexity. It was drawn for twenty-five pounds.

“How would it do to question Vincent? He might know something which would cast light on the matter,” suggested Mr. Hope.

“Very good; let us call him.” And Mr. Dudley rang a small bell which stood on the mantelpiece. As he waited for the response, he stirred the fire with noisy impatience, and refreshed himself with a tremendous pinch of snuff.

As Mr. Vincent, the head-clerk, came in, Mr. Hope, taking up the cheque, said:

“Do you know anything of this? Is there a cheque missing from the desk?”

Mr. Vincent peered at the cheque very cautiously through his spectacles, and shook his head. The writing was evidently strange to him. It was in fact a blundering imitation of Mr. Dudley’s writing, and of the firm’s usual signature. “I should say that it is a forgery, gentlemen. It is an unskilful imitation of the firm’s signature.”

“Yes,” returned Mr. Hope. “That is just what it is. Do you know anything which would cast light on the matter?”

“Nothing, sir, except this. Yesterday afternoon I discovered that while I was in here speaking with Mr. Dudley some one had torn a blank cheque out of the book; but as you had just passed by my desk, I thought it very likely

that you had done so, and on that account I said nothing at the time; I meant, however, to ask you at the first opportunity. I cannot say, though, how long the cheque has been missing."

"I did nothing of the sort, Vincent; and if I had done so I should have filled up the counterfoil properly. Was anything written there?"

Mr. Hope looked quite startled at the supposition.

"No, sir; I will show it you."

In a couple of minutes Mr. Vincent returned with the cheque-book. There it was, minus the cheque in question, and with the blank counterfoil left as he had said.

"I have not set eyes on the cheque-book these three days," said Mr. Hope; "and supposing I had required a cheque, you may rest assured I should never have taken one in that clumsy, unbusinesslike way. I know nothing of the cheque, nor of the money obtained by it."

"It is a queer matter," said Mr. Dudley. "Was any one else near your desk at or about that time can you remember?"

"George Smyth could have had access, of course, his desk being near mine; so could Lyon, so could Cooper; but I never found them anything but honest. Still, that some one took it is evident. It is dated two days since."

"Yes," returned Mr. Hope. "On looking at the entries in the bank-book this morning, I found this cheque mentioned. I have made inquiries, but the cashier can give no information, further than that a young fellow, who was, he thought, in our employ, pretended to cash it for me. Of course, I am as totally in the dark as yourself."

"I hardly like to say so, but I think that young Smyth is going far wrong," said Mr. Vincent, shaking his head. "His companions and his habits are both bad; but though

"I suspect him, it would not be fair to condemn him without proof. Leave it to me, gentlemen, for a couple of days; I think I can ferret it out."

"Very good; do your best, then," returned Mr. Dudley; "and as soon as you have gleaned anything, report it to us."

"I will, sir;" and with that Mr. Vincent took his departure, marvelling within himself that such a thing as forgery should take place in that office, and under his very nose, as it were. As he resumed his seat at his desk he cast his eyes around, as if he would read the thoughts of those who were subordinate to him; but they were all busy writing, and entering up accounts, and he wiped his spectacles, and sighed over the degeneracy of young men in general, as he set to work trying to think out the mysterious affair. Full thirty years had he been in that office, in one position or another, and only once, as far as he knew, during that long experience, had any theft taken place there. It worried him beyond measure. It puzzled him, too, the more he thought of George Smyth; for while not knowing enough of him to come to any decision, he was yet sure that all was not as it should be. There were certain indications of speech, opinions, and manner in the lad, which led him to infer that his habits and resorts were none of the best. Still he had never known him to be otherwise than correct, conscientious, and industrious, if slow. Then was it Lyon who abstracted the cheque? Was it Cooper? He scarcely dared to think. Both of them had been in the service of the firm for some years, and possessed exemplary characters: it would be awkward, to say the least, for him to insinuate a doubt as to the trustworthiness of either of them. But he had pledged his word to the principals that he would discover the thief if possible, and it behoved him to do his

best. Whoever the thief was he was an awkward one, else he would not have left the blank counterfoil behind as an evidence of his guilt; but unless the cashier could identify the lad who presented it for payment, which seemed very unlikely, it appeared improbable that the guilty person would be detected.

While the head-clerk worried and fretted in his office, Mr. Dudley and Mr. Hope did the same in theirs. It was not so much the amount that annoyed them, as the knowledge that some one in their employ had played thief. It is not pleasant to fear dishonesty in any relation of life, and in a business house like theirs, the chances were that if this were not found out other things would go undiscovered. And so the two gentlemen sat discussing the matter, and arranging plans for the detection of the perpetrator of the fraud, until the gathering shades of evening warned them that business hours were over. But it was of no use; they left the counting-house as much in the dark as ever, and continued so for many days afterward.

But there was one who could have cast some light on the matter, had he been so minded. George Smyth noted the whispered remarks and secret conferences between the head-clerk and the partners, with much misgiving and inward fear. "Conscience makes cowards of us all;" and so George found it. He stole furtive glances at his superiors every now and then, wondering if they suspected him, and went in and out of the office, to and from his duty, smarting under a sense of guilt, and fearing every moment that something would turn up to fix the charge upon him. Depend upon it, honesty is the best policy in every sense; and George began to think so now, with remorse and regret that he had ever wandered from the uprightness which he once possessed. And his conscience told him that this was

the second time he had been guilty of wrong-doing, although not found out till now. How he came to fall before the tempter this second time I will tell in my next chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

CHARLIE HOBBS'S DEMANDS.

"Have ye ever watched the face that bore
A look to be feared and pitied more?
Have ye seen the crimson torrent steal
Over one who has erred, and yet can feel,
When the stammering speech, and downcast eye
Quailed from the mean, detected lie?
Have ye marked the conscious spirit proclaim
Its torture 'neath the brand of shame?
Methinks 'tis better far to trace
The lines of Death, than the shade of Disgrace."
ELIZA COOK.

"You must manage it somehow. I want it badly, and you can get it for me."

"I can't, Charlie; and what is more, I won't."

"Dear me, how honest we are grown! You were not always so, George; do you wish me to refresh your memory?"

"No, I don't; I think of it too often myself, and hate myself for it. You needn't remind me of that matter, for I shall never forget it, I think."

"But, maybe, some other people would like to know it too. How would you like me to tell them?"

"You would never do anything so mean as that?"

"Wouldn't I? By Jove, I would, if you pushed me too far. Look here, now, if you don't get that cheque for me,

during next week, all that affair shall be known by the governors, and then you look out for the consequences!"

"But you had as much to do with it as I had."

"Begging your pardon, I hadn't. Who took the money—you or I?"

"But, Charlie, I have replaced it again."

"Ah well! You *took* it, didn't you?"

The speakers were our old acquaintances, George Smyth and Charlie Hobbs. It was the old, old story, of tempter and tempted—and as usual the tempter had more power, because of the former yielding on the part of the tempted. George Smyth had paid back every farthing of the sum he had abstracted on account of that racing bet, unaided by Charlie Hobbs, and had vainly imagined himself free from the consequences. But it is easier to get into the meshes of the net of wrong-doing than to get out, and so the poor lad found it. Ever after that, Charlie Hobbs exercised a cruel power over him, and made him the miserable tool in much of his wickedness. Now, he wanted a blank cheque abstracted from the cheque-book of the firm, and of course, whom should he seek to enlist in his nefarious scheme but poor George? George would have been honest had he been left alone, but Charlie Hobbs's cunning and threats were too much for him, and when threatened with exposure for the past, he weakly yielded. The mere thought of the theft—"borrowing," as Charlie styled it—being made known to the firm, although replaced long ago, was agony to him, and rather than risk it he would plunge deeper into sin.

"Well, what is it you wish me to do now?" and as George spoke, the pallor of his face and the misery of his tone would have softened any heart that had not been far gone in sin. "I would sooner leave Liverpool than submit to such continued persecution. It is nothing less."

"Softly, my fine fellow," returned Charlie. "People can't leave Liverpool for other places unless they have characters, and what sort of a character would yours be if I told all I knew? But you needn't make such a fuss. Taking a cheque,—a blank one, mind you, and that is all I wish you to do,—is not half nor quarter so bad as helping yourself out of the till."

"A cheque! What in the world do you mean?" cried George in alarm. "Of what use is a blank cheque to you, unless——Good gracious! you don't mean to say that you will help yourself."

"It's no difference to you what I do with it, and, besides you needn't be so nice. All I want is for you to give me the cheque. You know you can, if you like."

"But then you will have the means of robbing in your own hands."

George looked horror-stricken almost at the bare thought of placing such unlimited power within Charlie's reach.

"Confound you! it's nothing to you what I shall do with it. You will have no meddling with it. You will not even be brought into the matter; so you needn't be afraid for your skin?"

"I'm not satisfied, Charlie," said George. "How do I know that you won't compromise me?"

"Look here," and Charlie took out the draft of a letter written by one of the firm, signed of course at the bottom with the usual signature. How he had found it he did not say, but he had it, and evidently meant to use the knowledge thus acquired most unscrupulously. "While I have this, I don't want your name. But, mark you, mum's the word, if you wish to keep your place."

"I tell you what, Charlie," returned George, as light seemed to break in upon his mind, "I think you are qualify-

ing pretty fast for the convict establishment. If you mean to commit forgery, I'll not help you to it."

"Don't give me lectures on honesty, Mr. Thief," sneered Charlie. "You forget the Derby, don't you?"

"For goodness sake, be quiet, Charlie; I have paid every farthing back, and it's shameful for you to bring up things against me this way, when it's over and done with."

"Not shameful at all; and if you have any particular objections to hearing these things, which I have just whispered in your ear, proclaimed upon the housetops, you will do what I wish you to do."

George winced again beneath the unprincipled attacks and cruel threats of his companion. Oh, how hard it is to a youth to turn back, when once he has committed himself to evil deeds!

"Mark you, Charlie, if I give you this blank cheque our acquaintance will for ever come to an end. I would sooner confess my fault to the principals, and have done with the misery of it at once, than have you for ever casting it in my teeth, in order to compel me to do worse things."

"All right; now, when will you get it for me?"

"Well, see me some time this evening." And George turned away, hating his tempter as only those can hate who are goaded and driven into the commission of acts which they loathe through the operation of shame and fear.

George returned to his work that day as under the influence of some terrible nightmare. Go where he would, do what he would, this terrible thing was ever present to him. He would have almost hailed the news of Charlie's death with satisfaction, for it would have brought him liberty from the galling thralldom in which he was held by his tormentor. As his pen did its work his sight failed; and his eyes swam as he pondered how best he should accomplish the hateful deed.

It was necessary to watch his opportunity, so as to avoid detection, for Mr. Vincent had a keen eye, while Lyon and Cooper would be sure to notice anything suspicious. He was half hoping, half fearing that no opportunity would arise, when all at once, while Lyon was out on some special mission, and Mr. Vincent was engaged in another room, Satan whispered—"Now; now is your time; *now*."

George looked round, and saw that Cooper was buried in the depths of an intricate account; and, without more ado, he rose, and gently slipping aside to Mr. Vincent's desk, whereon lay the cheque-book, quietly tore out one, and as quietly resumed his seat. His heart went pit-pat as he sat down; he was not yet hardened enough to commit the deed without anguish of mind, and even as he folded up and thrust the paper into his pocket he cursed the miserable necessity which compelled him to it. It was no wonder that his hand shook, and his pen spilled the ink about in great unsightly blots, so that Mr. Vincent had to reprove him more than once for the disgraceful state of his accounts. Could he have read George's inmost heart, he would have pitied the lad as much as he blamed him.

That night, under cover of darkness, Charlie had an interview with George, and obtained the cheque. George had still caution enough to implore him not to compromise himself, but the lad answered only with a mocking laugh, and went off, shouting to George to "beware for himself."

George knew but too well what he meant, and in his sickening apprehension turned off in a contrary direction from the one towards his home, seeking to cool his fevered brow by a solitary night ramble. As he strolled down by the docks, every nerve quivering with the tension of strong excitement, he half wished he were dead; and when presently he walked along by the softly-plashing, moonlit

waters, he wondered dimly whether it would be such a great sin, after all, to leap in and put an end to the agony that he was enduring. Nothing but the belief in a hereafter kept him from it, and wearily and sadly the poor haunted lad turned and sought his home.

For he was, in the worst sense, a haunted lad, because haunted and pursued by the memory of his evil deeds; and such haunting is the worst a human soul can have. It is at such times that the floodgates of evil are thrown open, and the wicked one carries away the sinner captive at his will, ready to do his bidding, and plunge deeper into woe, that so he may escape the consequences of the past. This is why the transgressor adds sin to sin, until, like Judas, the measure of his iniquity is filled up, and he departs to "his own place." Only a watchful providence prevented George from doing that night what could never be undone. In after years he looked back upon it as a great crisis in his life. As he returned to his home his knees shook, and his tongue was dried up like a piece of parchment, while his face assumed such a wild, blanched appearance, that his mother, on his going in, asked him if he were ill. It were well if he had been only ill; the infirmity of the body is nought compared to the cry of the wounded soul. But the fact that this cry is voiceless, is all the more proof of the acute agony which a sin-stricken conscience can inflict. During his painful tossing on his bed that night, George dreamt himself back into the fairy-land of childhood. What was the bitterness of his heart to find, when morning broke, that it was *only* a dream?

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE TRACK.

GEORGE SMYTH bore his burden much like a guilty thief—so much like one indeed, that Mr. Vincent was, two or three times, very near to charging him point blank with the crime; only a cautious fear of getting into a worse difficulty restrained him. Still tongues sometimes show wise heads—notably so, if anything is to be gained by keeping still tongues. And there was everything to be gained in this case, for the head clerk had as good as given his word to discover the secret—the more so that he had mentioned his suspicions in regard to Smyth. For that this young man was concerned in the fraud, Mr. Vincent felt assured; but how to find it out was the question.

Very quietly and very keenly did that gentleman observe George's comings and goings. Also just as keenly did he notice his embarrassments, his mistakes, and his hesitating manner; and he was in no degree slow to attribute all these to a certain fact. He had examined the youth's desk, and found no criminatory evidence on his blotting paper. There was no proof of his having been connected with the fraud in any way, if I may except those indications in the lad's manner which usually betoken guilt; but these Mr. Vincent accepted as almost proof positive. Finally he determined to ask George straightforwardly if he could furnish any information concerning the missing cheque. But, like the wily man that he was, he waited until the next blunder came out; and while George was confused with shame on account of the rebuke he had so well merited. Mr. Vincent

called him aside into a little office, used only as a receptacle for samples and piles of paper.

"Young man," said he, "what is the meaning of all these blunders? People don't generally make mistakes every hour of the day if they have easy minds."

"What do you mean, sir?" stammered out George.

"I mean just this, my lad; that you have more on your mind than is pleasant or agreeable, and so it comes to pass that you are slovenly and incorrect in your work. I know more than you may think I do; I am not speaking without just cause."

"I—I—don't understand, sir," said George. "What have I done?"

"You know what you've done. You needn't look so frightened over it; you'd better make a clean breast of it, and tell the truth; it would be much the best way. I tell you the eyes of the firm are upon you."

"What do you mean? You don't blame me for the cheque, do you?" and George's face, generally pale, and worried as it was, now looked like a whitewashed wall.

"Yes, I do mean the cheque, my young fellow, and what's more, unless you tell all you know about it pretty quickly, you'll have to take up your quarters somewhere else."

"I haven't the cheque; I never had it, and I don't know what has been done with it."

"You had it once," retorted Mr. Vincent, "if you haven't it now, so I'd advise you to tell the whole truth."

"Well, I know who had it, and since it must come out, the sooner the better. Only I'd sooner tell Mr. Hope about it. Perhaps he'll have some mercy—Mr. Dudley would have none. And whatever happens I'll never see the inside of a prison alive, for I am not all to blame, nor yet by a great deal."

"Very well, then, you shall see Mr. Hope. Only I'd advise you to keep nothing back if you would seek any mercy from him. Mr. Hope will never pardon prevarication or lying. Here, Gainsford," and he shouted to the office messenger, who happened just then to be passing within hearing. "Ask Mr. Hope if he will be kind enough to come here a few minutes. Tell him it's particular business."

"All right, sir," and away Gainsford went.

Perhaps Mr. Vincent was afraid that George would make good his escape if he were left alone for two minutes, though how he could do so might well have puzzled anybody, seeing that one might almost have knocked him down with a feather. At any rate the head clerk stood contemplating the youth as if he were some extraordinary specimen of the *genus homo*. Poor fellow; his teeth chattered in his mouth, and he had to hold on by the office table to keep from falling. Indeed he felt more like fainting than anything else. As Mr. Hope came in Mr. Vincent went out, rightly judging that his presence would be a bar to the confession which George desired to make.

"Well, Smyth," said Mr. Hope, as he took the only stool the office contained, "have you something to say to me? Is it about this forged cheque?"

"Forged cheque, sir!" repeated George in terror. "I didn't know that it was forged—I knew nothing whatever about that, but it was I who stole the cheque."

"You who stole the cheque! Don't talk in riddles, my lad. I don't understand you."

"I stole it to give to Charlie Hobbs. If it was forged it is he who has done it. After it left my hands I knew nothing more until I overheard yesterday something about a missing cheque, and then, of course, I concluded it was the one I had stolen."

"But why did you steal it for Charlie Hobbs? Do you mean to say that you didn't use it yourself? Beware of putting the blame on somebody else's shoulders by a mean subterfuge."

"I wouldn't do that, sir;" and here George's courage seemed to return. He was going to tell the truth, all the truth—even though the recital should condemn him to a gaol; and the idea that his avowal was not to be accepted was a new and unlooked-for sting. "I wouldn't be so mean as that. I'm going to tell the truth, and that is bad enough, sir; but I'm not quite so base as to commit forgery."

"Well, go on; though how a person can be forced into dishonesty through fear of another is more than I can comprehend."

"I must begin at the beginning, sir; and then you will see how it was that Charlie Hobbs had such power over me. If I hadn't been dishonest he could not have succeeded, but I'll tell you. You remember the last Derby? Well, that was the beginning of it. We—Charlie Hobbs and I—staked money on a certain horse which we believed would win. Had he won we should have gained considerably; but as it was, we lost. The horse that we backed was 'nowhere,' so they said; and we two were in great trouble as to how we should meet our liabilities. Charlie suggested my borrowing the means for a little time from the petty-cash box; and so I did, but only on condition that he should assist me to repay it as soon as possible. He didn't help me, though; and I repaid all that sum out of my own earnings, and what I could get given me at home. Well, then, I made up my mind that I wouldn't have anything more to do with betting, or taking money that wasn't my own, and I told him so. For some time he kept shy of me, and our intimacy

grew less and less. I told him that I had repaid the sum which I borrowed from the petty-cash box, and that it was the last time I should ever be guilty of such practices. Indeed, sir, I would rather be found out at once, than carry such a burden on my mind again, especially when the one who helped me into it was for ever threatening to expose me. But a fortnight ago Charlie Hobbs came to me and told me that he wanted a blank cheque from your book. I thought at first it was only something to frighten me; but he was in earnest, and told me that if I didn't get it for him he would expose all about that last affair. And so he frightened me into doing what he wanted. I watched my opportunity, and managed to tear out a blank cheque when Mr. Vincent's back was turned, and in the evening I took the cheque to Charlie. I warned him of the consequences of forgery, and begged him not to do it, for, from seeing he had in his hands an old letter, which contained your signature, I feared that was what he was up to. But he would not listen; he only sneered at me and told me to 'beware for myself.' This is the whole history of the matter as far as I know it, and I'm certain if the cheque is forged, Charlie Hobbs is the forger."

"Well, you're a pretty pair, I must say; qualifying fast for the convict establishment, or the scaffold. I wonder you are not ashamed to come to and fro to work, knowing how you have defrauded us. I've half a mind to kick you out of the office, Smyth, and then send you both in company to the common prison."

"I deserve it, sir, I confess," returned George; "but if you knew what I have gone through during the last few months, and more especially since the last fortnight, you would pity me quite as much as you condemn me. I know quite well I have lost my character, and your good opinion, as well as

my situation, and that if you choose you can send me to prison; but I'm easy now. The secret is out, and my misery is nothing to what it has been. But, for my father's and my mother's sake, Mr. Hope, spare me. I am their only child, and if I go to prison it will break their hearts."

And George Smyth was right in making his confession, even though it criminated himself. What more terrible burden can a man impose upon himself than *the dread of being found out*? It is a nightmare by night, and a horrible phantom by day, ever paralysing heart and brain with a guilty, nameless fear, and stalking silently along with him, whether at home or abroad. This terrible ordeal had nearly broken down George's health. His old boyish energy and his peace of mind were all gone, and very soon his health would have gone too. It was the very best thing in the world for him to make a thorough confession.

Mr. Hope was hasty, but he was also merciful. His pity returned again as he looked at the pallid, nervous, guilty lad before him, and heard his faint plea for mercy. Said he—"I cannot decide on the matter now; I must consult with Mr. Dudley. But first I shall send for Charlie Hobbs, and hear his account of the matter in your presence and that of Mr. Dudley. We shall then decide what is to be done; but I think I may venture to promise you that you shall not suffer because of your candour. Meantime, I shall require you to remain in this office alone until I send for you. I shall depend on your integrity of purpose to be forthcoming at the right time." And Mr. Hope departed.

Very soon Mr. Dudley was put in possession of all the facts, and Charlie Hobbs was summoned to their presence. But some little bird in the air had carried the intelligence to Charlie that inquiries were being made of George Smyth respecting the missing cheque. Charlie had small confidence

that George would keep the secret, so, judging discretion to be the better part of valour, he stole out of the office, and made off. When Gainsford went to call him, he was *non est*, like many a thief before him.

CHAPTER XVII.

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.

IN a dimly-lighted chamber, small, and meanly furnished, sat a youth, diligently poring over a ponderous volume. The evening was somewhat advanced, and the youth had evidently studied long, for he heaved a sigh of relief as he closed the book, and turned aside to meditate over the contents of a letter which he took from his desk. It was not a long letter; evidently, however, it was on a pleasant subject, for he lingered long and lovingly over it, as one may imagine some old monkish student to have done over the pages of his illuminated missal. As he read and re-read, his head dropped on his hands in the attitude of deep thought, and for a long time his mind seemed to be wandering in the mazes of some bright promised land. Presently rising, he replaced the letter, and smiled as he muttered to himself, "Yes, yes, it is true. Light has arisen in the darkness."

And so it had. Edward Telford—for it was he—had at last found the open way for which he had been sighing,—sighing so long, indeed, that it had seemed sometimes almost like a perfect improbability that he should ever find it. It is a great trial of faith for ardent impetuous young souls to wait for the fulfilment of any long cherished hope.

Waiting is indeed almost the severest test which they can endure; *doing* would be far more in unison with their aspirations and feelings. And so it comes to pass, that so many, whose lives are of rare promise, fret themselves away in aimless, joyless inactivity, because they are not content to *wait* the workings of events. Full often, such eager souls rush into engagements and duties for which they are most unfitted, on account of their inaptitude for waiting. It was not so with Edward. Ormond's wise counsels and wiser help had developed such a spirit of childlike trust, and patient confiding toil, that his character had ripened and beautified during the weary season. And now that the answer had come, the opportunity found the man; the hour and the man were both fitted for each other.

For Mr. Lefroy, the pastor of the church with which Edward was connected, had, quite unexpectedly, requested him to commence a course of preparation for the ministry. He had noticed the lad's warm religious ardour, that ardour which some onlookers sneeringly term "first love." Many an injudicious friend throws cold water on this same "first love" of youthful converts, by reminding them that "Religion does not always walk in silver slippers." Nor does She, but assuredly it would be more kind and discreet if young Christians were encouraged a little in their rejoicing by their elders, and not frightened by dolorous tales of the rough and weary path which lies before them in this "waste howling wilderness." Mr. Lefroy was no counsellor of this sort: he rather pointed to higher joys, nobler attainments, and more exalted experience, as the goals to be sought after; knowing that encouragements in plenty were needed, if the battle with those arch-enemies of the faith,—“World, Flesh, and Devil,” was to be successfully fought out. And in Edward Telford he met a reciprocal feeling. The lad was

a sincere, thoughtful, high-principled soldier of the cross. Possibly on account of his constant delicacy of constitution, he had grown to be more self-contained and silent than he would otherwise have been; but when engaged in earnest conversation or honest, reverent discussion, his eyes would sparkle with the flash of intellectual brightness, and he would give utterance to sentiments which would have fallen not inaptly from the lips of more advanced Christians. Mr. Lefroy often found himself unconsciously admiring the boy whom he was trying to teach, and in some things he actually learnt of him. Of course, he was not unaware of the course Edward had marked out for himself, as Ormond had acquainted him with the young student's aspirations and labours; and when, in the course of events, an opening at college offered itself for a promising young man, he without hesitation offered it to him. This was the letter containing the offer, which so interested and absorbed Edward, on the evening to which we refer. It had reached him that same day, and now he felt as if he could not go to rest that night without acquainting his teacher of the good fortune,—if I may term it so,—which had befallen him.

It did not take him long to traverse the distance between his home and his teacher's. It was not very long, and he had often travelled it in desponding, almost faithless moods. But now, he seemed as if he could journey on the wings of the wind; all the world wore a brighter aspect because of this gleam of sunshine on his life. He felt as if he could have hugged the "hot potato" man at the corner, and made friends with the lamplighter, for very joy. His rat-tat-tat echoed through the hall of Ormond's home; and as the servant opened the door to admit the now familiar visitor, he noticed the bright joyousness of his manner, as something very different from his usual demeanour.

"Is Mr. Ormond at home?" he inquired.

"Yes, he is with Miss Ada in the drawing-room. Do you wish to see him alone?"

"No, not particularly. Anywhere will do for me."

"Then please to walk this way." Edward was an old acquaintance, as you know, and Miss Ada as well as her brother felt interested in all his doings and studies. Ada Lee was a bright, dark-eyed brunette of about eighteen, with hair as black as a raven, and a merry, mischievous face, that even in its most thoughtful aspects made you feel as if she were quizzing you; yet at the same time she possessed that most enviable faculty of making everybody feel at home with her in a few minutes. She was a complete stranger to that cold *hauteur* which some ladies affect; indeed, she scorned the very appearance of it. On this evening she was engaged in a game of chess with Ormond, who was allowing her to beat him, although he was an adept in the game. Just as Edward entered, Ada was making another successful move, laughing as she did so at her sage brother's "brown studies" which permitted her so easy a conquest. Edward paused a minute, feeling like an intruder, but both brother and sister turned and invited him to come in.

"Come in, Edward, come in," said Ormond. "Have you any good news? You look so happy."

"I have, sir. Look here!" and taking out the letter he handed it to him to read.

"The way is open," said Ormond, as he handed it to his sister after perusing it quickly himself. "Your way is clear now. This is an unmistakable call, and one which you must not disregard. What do you think, Ada?"

"Think! why, brother, you know what I think about Edward. His way is plainly marked out for him. He will be an earnest, devoted student, a successful preacher, a

renowned worker, in his chosen sphere. Although I am no Sibyl I can confidently predict this for him, and this offer is only the commencement of his brighter days."

"You are quite enthusiastic about Edward, Ada," said her brother.

"Of course I am," replied she. "Although I like fun and all that sort of thing which we call 'life,' I have regarded Edward with much honest respect for a long time, on account of his conscientious, earnest labours. I assure you that if I fritter my own life away I can honour those who do better."

Edward looked up to her with grateful respect, and, shall I say it, with something very like worship on his face. To his mind she looked radiantly beautiful,—the fairest and the best of all womankind,—and her warm-hearted espousal of his cause, as well as her sanguine interest in his prospects, drew out his young, strong, affectionate loyalty as no woman had ever drawn it out before. And so she was beautiful, for that higher beauty of the soul, which one so seldom sees on a face, rested upon hers. The scarlet camellia fastened in the glossy folds of her hair, and the one in her bosom, added to the loveliness of the picture, but best of all was the earnest, pure-hearted enthusiasm which irradiated her face, and made her to rise superior to anything Edward had ever dreamed of. This beauty of the soul is, I should think, part of that glorious beauty with which the saints of God shall be clothed when they arise from corruption to their inheritance of incorruption and glory; and the mere thought of it is something grand. How many of God's children are blind, deformed, decrepid, plain, homely, even *ugly*, if you will have it so, as the world calls ugliness in this life; but what a compensation it must be to such to know that part of their eternal dower

will be high, unfading beauty. And this soul-beauty, which even now sometimes shines through all the plainness and homeliness of its possessors, will then become permanent, enlarged, and glorified, because it will be in the image of *His likeness*. I suppose there is no affliction harder to bear than that of ugliness and deformity,—certainly not to a girl or a woman,—but the compensation will be in the life to come proportionately great and full. But to return.

“You don’t fritter your life away, Ada,” returned Ormond. “See what a help you are to me in all my labours of love. Why, if it had not been for you I could not have given Edward the help that I have in his studies. He would little think, to hear you, how hard you had worked at the Latin and French in order to make the supervision of his studies easier to me. You must thank my sister, Edward, for her unknown help.”

“And now that you are going to college, I shall wish you God-speed,” said Ada. “I am sure you will do well; you cannot help it. There is a bright future before you.”

“Thank you, Miss Ada,” returned Edward gratefully. “I will try to turn all your sanguine predictions into accomplished facts. But I am most grateful to you and Mr. Ormond for the kind help and interest which you have extended to me. I could not have gained this much without you.”

And Edward was more grateful when, that night, before leaving, Ormond gave him a cheque for the amount of his savings, just doubled. Shilling for shilling, Ormond had doubled every one which Edward had carefully laid by.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN HIDING.

"My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale;
And every tale condemns me for a villain."—SHAKESPEARE.

GEORGE SMYTH often wondered within himself what had become of Charlie Hobbs. He had never been found, although more pairs of eyes than one had been engaged looking for him since the day on which George had made his miserable confession. Charlie had taken himself off so effectually, that neither friends, companions, nor employers could learn anything of his hiding-place; and Mr. Dudley threatened, and fretted, and fumed with the utmost impatience, at the idea of so flagrant a transgressor slipping through their fingers. Had his counsels prevailed, it is most likely that George would have suffered for the crime in which he had half participated, but Mr. Hope's more merciful advice was followed, and he was permitted to remain in his situation on sufferance. That he was not very comfortable, you may easily imagine; no one who has committed himself in any way, and remains in his old position merely on sufferance, is likely to be very comfortable. More than this, George had pledged his word to the firm to aid them, by every means in his power, to discover the culprit, and until this had been done his confession had only half attained its object. But George was a weak lad in all that related to moral courage.

About three weeks subsequently to these occurrences, and while matters were still in this unsatisfactory state,

George received a note purporting to come from Hobbs. It was not in his handwriting,—although it seemed to be a feigned one,—and it besought George's kind offices in the most abject terms. It seemed from this note that he was in hiding somewhere—where, George could not exactly make out,—and that his means being exhausted, he was compelled to beg for assistance from his former dupe. Charlie was not so confiding as to give his address; but he informed George that if he would proceed that evening to a distant part of the city, and wait at a certain spot, giving a peculiar whistle in token of his being unaccompanied by any person, he—Charlie—would make his appearance. Now, had George been honest to his employers, he would have remained firm by his old determination, and have shown this note to one of the firm. But he did not. The imploring terms in which Charlie begged his help got the better of his righteous anger against him; and after picturing to himself the misery and dejection which were now the lot of his quondam companion, he hurriedly thrust the note into his pocket, resolving to go to the *rendezvous*, and at least *see* Charlie that evening. He could then judge better, he thought, as to the advisability of giving up the note.

Now this was a sort of dallying with temptation which could not be otherwise than injurious to George. In almost all such cases the weakness of soul which leads to such hesitating and parleying with danger is the ultimate cause of an ignominious fall. If the temptation be at once strenuously resisted, and the right course be followed without those dangerous after-thoughts, the good principle gains strength, and the wicked impulse is thrust on one side. It was not so with George; he considered and hesitated until he forgot his duty to himself and his employers, thinking

only that he would see Charlie *for once*, and then make up his mind as to the right course to pursue. Finally he resolved to be at the appointed spot that evening.

As dusk came on he grew very nervous, knowing as well as you and I do, that he was acting like a base traitor in having anything to do with a lad who had proved himself so despicable a character; for instead of following up his confession with the fullest reparation in his power, he was about to condone the crime by a false-hearted meddling, which would only entangle him further in the meshes of guilt. He tried to persuade himself that he was only kind to Charlie in acceding to his request, but a certain misgiving in his mind ought to have warned him away from such dangerous ground. It did not, and he went. On arriving at the spot he put his fingers in his mouth, and blew a shrill whistle—such a whistle as you have doubtless been startled with a hundred times when walking in the streets—and waited for the lad's appearance. Charlie seemed in no hurry, however, to appear; perhaps he was reconnoitring the ground, to make sure that no chance of detection existed; at any rate, it was not until George had given the signal the third time that he descried Charlie's face peeping round the corner. It took a second glance, to identify him, for he was dressed in a stable-boy's costume; and light corduroys, with sleeve-jacket, and a huge neckcloth had worked a wonderful metamorphosis in his appearance. George walked toward him, however, partly showing the note, as he did so, in order to reassure him. That Charlie was afraid of detection was very evident, for he looked about mistrustfully and fearfully, saying as he did so, "Are you alone, George? or do you mean to betray me?"

"Certainly not. I'm quite alone. I wouldn't have anybody know of my coming here on any account."

"You don't mean to sell me?" and Charlie looked up so imploringly, that George felt quite drawn over to his side, forgetting altogether that this side was the wrong one.

"No; you may depend on me; but how is it you are in this disguise?"

"For the sake of hiding my precious self. I'm stable-boy in a queerish sort of place near here, and if you'll promise me, honour bright, that you won't tell, I'll take you up to my den."

"Honour bright," said George. The tempter had gained him over again.

"Come along, then," and on the two lads went, turning here and doubling there, until by-and-by they got into a dark, dirty yard, in which was a building used for a barn. Into this Charlie went, and groping his way in the dark, slowly ascended some rickety stairs, keeping fast hold of George's hand. When they got to the top, he produced a box of matches, and striking a light, kindled a small end of candle stuck in a dingy stable lantern. He left the lantern open that it might make the place look all the brighter, but it was dismal and dingy enough in all conscience, do what he would to brighten it up. As he set the lantern down on a rough bench, and took his seat by George on the rude straw pallet which was his only bed, he heaved a sigh which spoke volumes.

"How in the world do you manage to live here? Do you really mean to say that this hole is your home?" broke out George, as soon as he took in the misery of the place.

"Of course it's my home, or what serves for one since you played me such a trick. You couldn't blame me for taking to my heels, when I heard what you had told, could you? Do you think I should sit still and wait for the kind attentions of the gentlemen in blue?"



"No,—I suppose not. Still, this is a dreadful kind of life, it seems to me."

"Dreadful or no, it's a thousand times better than the treadmill. And that is just what I should get if I were to remain where I could be found. Don't you think I know that the peelers are after me? And don't you suppose I know that Messrs. Dudley and Hope would give anything to get me, so that they might make an example of me? Oh, yes! I know all about it, you see, and that is the reason why I am here, in hiding. It is for nothing else that I endure this wretched loneliness. I'm sure that I haven't spoken to a single soul that I was friendly with since the day that I bade the office good-morning; and though I fill the situation of stable-boy here, I get so little for my work that I'm half starved. It seems months since I knew what it was to enjoy a good meal."

His appearance did not belie his words, for the sharp angles in his face told the miserable tale of pinching, want, and discomfort which had been his portion since living this isolated, outcast life. He had not even the necessaries of life, to say nothing of the comforts; and his whole demeanour confirmed the sad story.

"Wouldn't it be almost better to cast yourself on their mercy, than to remain here suffering what I know you must suffer?" suggested George. "This is a terrible kind of life, it seems to me."

"I've only you to thank for it," returned Charlie. "It was your blabbing tongue which did the mischief; and after you've made yourself right at my expense, you turn round and advise me to go to prison as coolly as possible. No, no; I didn't send for you for that."

"What did you want me for, then?"

"I want you to help me with a little money. It's no good

to shake your head about it, for money I want, and money I must have. In the first place, I must have some help in money or food, or I shall be half starved; and in the next place, if I can get away out of the country, I will."

"But your parents?" put in George.

"Don't talk about parents," almost fiercely exclaimed Charlie. "Such a son as I am is better dead to them. I suppose they fret about me day after day, but I can't help it; I *must* remain here quiet and wait my opportunity. But I can't do anything without your help; and as you were so mean as to screen your own back at the expense of mine, I shall expect you to give me that help. Do you see?"

George did see, but he didn't seem to relish it.

"I don't know that I can help you, Charlie. You know just how I am situated at the office now."

"It's no good to say you can't," replied Charlie, threateningly. "You've got to; you must, and what's more, *you shall*."

CHAPTER XIX.

SHIFTS AND STRUGGLES.

"What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted!
Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just;
And he but naked, though locked up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted."—SHAKESPEARE.

"Be easy, Charlie," returned George; "you'll gain nothing by threatening me. I don't know of any reason why I should help you, but all the other way. Didn't you help me into trouble over that betting job? and then made use of

it to push me into further wickedness? I don't profess to be good, as you know; but, I tell you, it don't pay to be dishonest; and now that the cat is out of the bag, I am ten times happier, and can do my work better than I could before."

"Of course you can, when you've cleared yourself at my expense: who couldn't? You had the meanness to shift off all the blame on to my shoulders, without so much as hinting what you meant to do, so as to give a fellow a chance. If somebody more kind than you hadn't given me a hint of what was going on, I should have been nicely caged before this time."

"I didn't shift off more blame to your shoulders than you deserved, neither did I voluntarily make a confession. I was suspected and questioned by the head clerk before I told one word calculated to criminate either you or myself. Somehow or other he seemed to have ferreted out part of the truth, and so had me entirely in his clutches. But I am not sorry that it did come out, for had it remained hidden, we should both of us have gone to destruction in double-quick time."

"You'd be sorry if you were in my place, I tell you. I've been fit to kill you, times, since I've been here in hiding, with no company save this dingy lantern, night after night, and the ugly rats." As Charlie spoke, he touched the lantern with his foot, and it fell over, causing the light to go out. "There, now, you see it's out; wait a minute, though, I've got the matches here somewhere;" and, striking another light, he rekindled the candle. "You don't know what I suffer from fear of those rats; and I burn out candle enough, to keep them off, to buy me two or three good meals each week. I tell you, I've got the worst of it through your meanness."

"I don't know that; you'd not think my place a very comfortable one if you were in it," returned George. "I am only allowed to continue there out of charity to my parents; as for ever rising, it's all out of the question. And I don't even know that I shall not have to bear you company in the felon's dock, when they can catch you."

"I'm glad you put that in; 'when they can catch me,' indeed! That's good, I must say. Do you mean to help them to catch me? You gave me your word of honour just now, you know, that you wouldn't. Are you going to keep to it?"

"Yes, yes, of course," returned George; "but it's altogether out of the question for you to expect me to help you, at least to any great extent. I've not really as much salary as would suffice for my own wants, and how can you have the conscience to ask me to do what you know is impossible?"

"I'm driven to do it. I wouldn't trouble anybody long, if I could only get out of this terrible mess. In addition to the disgrace, and the knowledge that I'm hunted like a dog, I've got to bear all sorts of privations, as I told you just now. You have got plenty to eat and to drink, as well as a comfortable home, but I—I've got nothing," and here Charlie looked down on the floor, and began to sob. His condition was really an illustration of the truth, that "the way of transgressors is hard."

"But why do you remain here, if the wages and board are so poor?"

"Don't you understand? I'm in hiding, and these folks have guessed that I have some sort of secret, so that I'm under their thumb, body and soul; and I dare not ask for more without being threatened with exposure. Then, if I leave them, and escape to another part of the city, I have

no means to buy fresh clothes—for, of course, I couldn't return to my own—and so I'm certain of detection, do what I will, unless you help me. Only you can do it."

"I don't see how. I've not the means, in the first place; and if I had there's the danger of detection still, for I know our people watch my doings as a cat would a mouse. And if I come visiting you, I shall lead you into trouble, as well as get into it myself. I shall get my footsteps dogged, and then *your* chance, as well as my own, will go. Perhaps I could occasionally send you a shilling or two in stamps."

"Oh! that won't do, my fine fellow. You won't get off so easily, I can tell you. Instead of shillings I want pounds, and pounds I must have, by hook or by crook."

George looked up astounded. "You are talking the sheerest folly imaginable, and you know you are. How am I to get pounds? And if I had, do you think I should be doing my duty to my friends to spend them on you? No, indeed."

"Don't make me desperate,—but you will, if you talk so, I tell you. I *cannot* stay here; and I cannot get away unless you help me. And you shall help me,—even if you don't find me in sufficient means to reach America."

It was strange, but Charlie Hobbs had always possessed a secret power for evil over George Smyth, which nobody else ever exercised. His was the stronger mind, and as it always happens in such cases, the stronger wins the day. George had a kind of stubborn resistance about him, but as it was not founded on principle, he was bound to succumb beneath the influence of a more determined will. This was the secret of his coming to see Charlie at all, and now that he had come he was certain to be led into doing that of which his conscience disapproved.

"Well," said he, after pondering a minute, "I can let you have an old suit of my clothes, so as to help you away from

this place, and I may be able to raise a shilling or two. It seems to me that your best plan would be to get into another situation for a time, which you will be able to do, if I help you in this way, and then save money enough to get away to America. Your friends would help you on the quiet, perhaps, if it were safe to do so."

"Yes, but what situation do you think I could take?"

"Not a very good one; of course I know that. Couldn't you do something at the docks, or as errand lad, or even at a cab-stand? You could be disguised, so that nobody should know you. Anything you could get would be better than this life, according to your own showing. But I must be going now; will you think over what I say and decide by to-morrow? As to my helping you out to America, at my own cost,—and that's what you mean, I know,—it's out of the question."

"Well, I suppose it must be so, then; but don't you fail me, George. I shall be looking out for you at the same place to-morrow evening."

"Let it be so, then; but an hour later would be better, as there are sharp eyes about." And George took his departure.

Charlie remained ruminating over his position long after George's footfalls had ceased to sound in his ears. His misery seemed more endurable now that there seemed some prospect of getting out of it. He cared not what his work would be; he was ready and willing to do anything rather than face starvation or a gaol.

George was at the trysting-place on the next evening, with the promised suit of clothes, and a little money, which Charlie was only too thankful to accept. Very soon he gave his master "the slip," as he called it, leaving his office of stable-boy open to the next seeker. For some week or two

he led a desultory, wandering sort of life, picking up odd jobs here and there, and sleeping at night in one of the many low lodging-houses with which Liverpool abounds. By dint of hard seeking, and importunity, he at last obtained an engagement as errand-lad and general drudge at a large billiard saloon. This position was not by any means calculated to help him in his endeavours to lead an honest life, but in Charlie's judgment it was many degrees before the other, and perhaps, in point of creature comfort, it was so. George was compelled to keep up a little communication with him, from time to time, although somewhat against his will, for Charlie was continually boring him with letters asking for pecuniary help. Once or twice, detection nearly followed in consequence of George's visits, and then Charlie in haste removed to other lodgings, thus for a time avoiding the danger. For months this Ishmaelitish life went on, both the youths suffering meanwhile the keenest tortures of mind. Such a life must of necessity be one of the most miserable, seeing that of all burdens, the fear of detection and the misery of guilt are the heaviest to bear. It was no wonder that it sat on George's mind like a nightmare; no wonder that in the dim and silent watches of the night he moaned, and muttered, and dreamed, until his parents got possessed with the idea that he was drifting into serious illness. How could it be otherwise? Had he not sown the wind? now he was reaping the whirlwind.

CHAPTER XX.

PROGRESS.

"I CANNOT for the life of me imagine what you see in young Telford, Ada, to be so interested in him. In my opinion it is exceedingly questionable, if not wrong for you to be talking to him so frequently and so confidentially."

"But I only talk to him about his studies, and help him a little. That is not so very confidential I should imagine. Besides, it is for Ormond's sake that I do it."

"But, my dear, Ormond is quite competent to take charge of his own pupils. And however quixotic it may be in him to espouse the worries and the struggles of these Sunday-school lads, it is sheer nonsense in you—if not something worse. Silly as I think him, I view you in a ten times worse light: a young lady of your position has no business meddling with the affairs of apprentice boys."

"It is not meddling, sister; I am perfectly certain that I am no officious meddler. If I were, Ormond would soon see it, and give me a word of caution. Neither is my conduct unmaidenly, as you seem to intimate. I would sooner cut off my right hand than compromise myself in any respect, and I am certain that Ormond's brotherly fears would soon be awakened if there were really good reason for what you say."

"Yes, yes! Ormond is your great authority on all occasions, but in my opinion his eyes are so blinded by his own work, and his confidence in your excellence, that he is no reliable guide. For instance, I noticed how young Melton's eyes were fixed upon you at that party the

Other evening, while you and Edward Telford were having such a comfortable *tête-à-tête*. He inquired of a gentleman near me who Telford was, and on being informed, shrugged his shoulders with a most decided sneer. I wonder how you could devote yourself so entirely to that young man, when you know that so many others of your own rank were longing for one word from you. And I am certain you might make a conquest of Melton if you chose."

"But suppose I don't choose," returned the incorrigible Ada.

"Then I must say you are standing in your own light. You are silly, and worse than silly, to neglect such favourable chances for the questionable pleasure of gossiping with a poor student; and you must have a queer taste, most decidedly."

"And I suppose you will think it queerer when I tell you that I prefer ten minutes of Edward Telford's talk to whole hours of young Melton's inanities. He cannot converse; he is at home in the two subjects of wine and horses, but beyond those, he can only twirl his cigar and talk nonsense."

"My dear, you must not expect every young gentleman of your acquaintance to be a Socrates."

"Nor do I; but I expect common sense. The young gentlemen one meets with nowadays are mostly fops, or else so destitute of common intelligence that their society is rather irksome than otherwise. And beside, they all unite in thinking that young ladies desire to be amused with nonsense. I verily believe that most of them regard us as beings existing only for pleasure and display, and treat us accordingly. It is really an agreeable change when one of the masculine gender pays us the compliment of recognizing us to be rational beings. Now, for my own part,

I do not adopt the *rôle* of a learned woman or a blue-stocking, but I do like common sense and ordinary intelligence."

"Well, really! you are the queerest girl I ever met with. Ormond has spoiled you outright."

"I believe he has; seeing that unconsciously, somehow, I expect all young men of education and position to come up to his standard; consequently, when they do not, I turn away disgusted."

"You are too exacting, Ada. By setting up such a lofty ideal you will only reap trouble and disappointment. Not many girls have such high-flown notions as you have, and a good thing too; for if they had, they would certainly pine in single-blessedness all the days of their lives."

"Which I consider infinitely preferable to being tied up for life to a man whom you can neither respect nor love. What is there in the thought of single-blessedness which should be so frightful?"

"You put me out of all patience with you! Do you think when I accepted Mr. Huntingdon that I ever hinted at such a thing as mental acquirements, or educational position? Not I; his means and position in life were those of a gentleman, and so I took him, as he took me, 'for better, for worse.' I tell you, Ada, you are too high-flown and romantic. The time will come when you will see the folly and stupidity of all this nonsense, and then you will think on my words. Till then, I shall wait; hoping that 'a change will come o'er the spirit of your dream.' But in my private opinion Edward Telford occupies too large a place in your heart. I shall not breathe a word of this to anybody else, except to mamma, trusting to your good sense to rectify the mistake you have so unfortunately glided into."

"My dear sister, if the fear of any tenderness between Edward Telford and myself be any burden to your mind,

pray do not carry it about with you a moment longer. I would not disturb your peace, for one hour, over such a thing. Unburden your mind to mamma as soon as possible, and I am willing to undertake my own justification. Is it not hard that I cannot show ordinary kindness to a young man who is worthy of all, and more than all, without these interpretations being placed upon it? There is no love in the matter."

And Ada's face flushed a deep crimson as she rose and went to the other side of the room, and reached down a volume of engravings as if to put a stop to the conversation. She looked almost queenly in her beauty, and her firm decided tread told what her words did not—that she would be queen over her own conscience. Although Ada Lee disclaimed the idea of any such tender feeling as *love*, existing in her mind, there was yet some truth in Mrs. Huntingdon's charge.

That lady was a clever, keen-sighted, far-seeing woman of the world, and her eyes saw very clearly that Edward Telford and Ada Lee were more to each other, though as yet unconsciously so, than all the world beside. She had thought by a few clever hints and cautions to stop the progress of the "delusion," but Ada's manner of receiving her well-intentioned interference only served to convince her that her suspicions were justified and that her meddling was mistaken. Under these circumstances she allowed the subject to drop, but pondered it over in her heart the more.

Edward Telford and Harry Gilfillan were both going to college—the one to be trained as a minister, and the other as a schoolmaster. Edward had reached the height of his wishes in being permitted to attain to the distinction of a student. In reality he had been a student for years—only a secret one; but now he was to attain to the *status* of a

college student. Not that he was by any means lifted up by his unexpected success; his was one of those bright, unassuming, honest natures which nothing could lift up. Walking "humbly before his God," and justly before his fellow-men, he was an illustration of the principles he professed. Whether he read the feelings of Ada's mind towards him at this early period, or not, he never suffered the fact to overbalance for one moment, his sober judgment, or to develop itself into such tenderer demonstrations as might have endangered his intercourse with her family. Rather it nerved him onward and upward to increased diligence and noble effort, as a young man can only be nerved and inspired by the love of a good and a true woman, making him strive to become more and more worthy of her.

Harry Gilfillan had accomplished his term as pupil-teacher with credit to himself, and promised to make a fair schoolmaster. It being his chosen vocation, and the work his soul delighted in, it was more than probable he would succeed. Beside this he had proved himself not unworthy of his teacher, in high principle, fearless conscientiousness, and reverence for whatever was good and holy. Such characters always make their marks upon the "sands of time;" and although there was no decisive consecration of heart and life to the Redeemer's service as yet, Ormond knew there was a good *substratum* on which to build the superstructure of a fair Christian character. He had not laboured in vain with him, and he had faith to believe that in the time to come—that fair future that seemed to Harry Gilfillan of such a roseate hue—his work would receive an abundant reward. Such faith is never unhonoured.

CHAPTER XXI.

FRANK HUNTINGDON'S ILLNESS.

"We must lay down the flower we love
Held close in doting pride!
We must be ready to willingly spare,
On Life's Altar, the things most fair—
And loved beyond all beside."—ELIZA COOK.

"ONE would think 'Uncle Ormond' were better than all the world beside! You are just the last person I was wishing for! I'm so glad you are come, for I cannot satisfy Frank, do what I will," and Mrs. Huntingdon marshalled Ormond—who had called in to know how his little nephew was getting on—into her own boudoir. "He has been crying and worrying for you ever since this morning, but I knew you couldn't come till evening, or at least until business hours were over. I wonder what curious affinity there is between you and him, that you are so happy in each other's society, and Frank so miserable when away from you."

"I can't say, Alice, unless it be that 'fellow-feeling' of which Coleridge sings. There is much in Frank which reminds me of my own younger days, and as I read myself in him, I am more drawn to him than ever. How is he to-day?"

"Ill; very. Dr. Sergeant seems to fear consumption; he says that Frank has all the premonitory signs; but I hope not. It would be a crushing blow to us to have him cut off in such a way. And he has such queer notions, too. He told me this morning, as gravely as possible, that he should not live."

As the only child, and heir to a large amount of wealth, Frank Huntingdon was loved with that fond idolatry which is generally accorded to an only child. As we have before said, he was a boy of unusual quickness and precocity—too quick and precocious, in fact, for long life. He was constitutionally delicate, and subject to frequent attacks of illness. Bronchitis was the foe which lurked continually in his path, reminding his parents that their loved one was but a very fragile flower. On this occasion the attack was more severe than usual, and the little sufferer, though at times half-delirious, moaned continually for “Uncle Ormond to stay with him.” Mrs. Huntingdon, although a doting mother, was not a good sick-room nurse—few votaries of fashion are; and the child perceived, with intuitive quickness, that other people could minister better to his needs in illness and despondency than could his own parents. Mr. Huntingdon was busy in his counting-house, on ‘change, in the mart—anywhere but in the quiet sick-room. He was willing to toil for his boy, night and day, if need be, to amass wealth for him, so that he should have no necessity to worry over business speculations, or slave in the counting-house, as he had done for the best part of his life. Seeing Frank’s predilection for quiet, thoughtful studies, he had made up his mind to furnish him with sufficient means to live, according to his own taste, in quite elegant independence. Of course, into all these plans the possibility of an early grave never entered. Occasionally, indeed, an ominous *if* might cross his mind, as he looked at Frank’s fragile form, and listened to the medical man’s opinions, but the unwelcome visitor was soon spirited away with the thought, “No, no; Frank must live, and become perhaps one of the geniuses of his age. Who knows? I *cannot* spare him.” And thinking like this, he refused to hear of danger, much

ess to believe in any predisposition to premature decay. Some men do go on, ostrich-like, refusing to see danger, as far as it regards their loved ones, until it comes upon them, and Mr. Huntingdon was one of this sort. He had promised Frank a pony as soon as he was better, but if the little fellow had asked him to read a chapter out of his 'Peep of Day,' he would have made any excuse rather than have done it, and would have sent home a parcel of toys on his next going out, to chase away Frank's dull feelings. Such parents are not the ones to minister to the deepest needs of a child's nature, and it was perhaps in consequence, that Frank Huntingdon turned most to his Uncle Ormond for the teaching and comfort he could not find elsewhere.

"Where is he? Shall I find him in his own room?"

"Yes, the nurse is with him, and he is contented to be with her for a while; but if you will stay with him for an hour or two he will be so pleased. Unfortunately, I have an engagement to attend a ball this evening, which, having accepted, I cannot quite neglect. I must go, if only for an hour; could you stay with Frankie while I go? It would be a favour, both to him and to me."

"Yes, certainly. I am come for the express purpose of sitting a little while with him."

"Only, don't get preaching to him! Frank has such queer notions already, and he has partly learned them from you. I wouldn't for the world have them encouraged."

"What do you mean, Alice?"

"Why, he has such queer ideas about dying and the like. He actually told me to-day that he would sooner die than live. I told him that he must be silly to think of such things."

"Why, silly! What makes you call such notions queer?"

"Because I do. Frank is born to riches, and a high position. We mean him to enjoy life in its fullest sense, as far as pleasure and enjoyment go. I am quite aware that you religious people discountenance everything that is not gloomy and sorrowful, but I, on the contrary, delight in all that is gay and happy. And I mean my boy to have the same tastes as myself. He must neither have the tastes nor the opinions of a religious fanatic."

"Alice, you are labouring under a delusion. Your boy will never become gloomy by learning to love Jesus; on the contrary, it will gild all his life with untold sweetness. And I think your judgment must be strangely distorted, or else you must have been subject to most misguided influences, to think and assert, that religious people discountenance all mirth and enjoyment. There is a mirth—the mirth of fools, which, as Solomon says, is 'like the crackling of thorns under a pot'—which we do discountenance; and we resolutely set our faces against wicked profanity; but all innocent pleasures we follow and approve. Especially, I think, does religion justify us in making little ones happy. And I am certain that Frank will be none the worse, but much better and happier, for knowing and loving Jesus.

"I'll promise you not to make Frank gloomy, at any rate. If you wish to stay two or three hours to-night at this ball, you need not be uneasy; I shall not leave him until you return. I should not imagine that much immediate danger existed."

"No, not exactly, but I should not be easy away so long a time. An hour will be quite as long as I shall care to stay."

So Mrs. Huntingdon, after imprinting a farewell kiss on the cheek of her little son, left him in the custody of his uncle, and went to her dressing-room to prepare for the

ball. While she despised her brother's opinions, and disbelieved them as much as she dared, she yet respected and trusted him to the fullest extent. Now that Ormond was sitting by her sick boy she could feel easy,—easier than if a dozen servants were keeping vigil over him.

Frank was delighted at his uncle's appearance. "And are you really coming to stay with me, Uncle Ormond? Oh! I have wanted you so badly all day. I want to sit in your lap while you tell me some more of those pretty stories, and sing me your Sunday-school hymns. I can almost sing one,—‘I want to be an angel,’ but I've forgotten the last verse, I think. Now, you'll teach me, won't you?"

"Yes, Frankie; I'm going to stay with you a long time this evening,—for some hours, if nothing happen. We'll have over some nice stories and hymns before you get tired, and then I shall see you off to sleep before I go. Will that do?"

"Oh! yes, uncle, you are always so good!" And the sick boy fondled Ormond's hands, as if their very touch did him good, while tears of gratified joy stood in his large blue eyes. Frank was a very sensitive child—even more so than his appearance indicated, and now, in consequence of continued weakness, most thoughtful and pensive. It was not sadness, however. Mrs. Huntingdon had given it a wrong interpretation; for so little did she read the higher, finer feelings of her child's soul, that he and she were like strangers to each other in spiritual things.

CHAPTER XXII.

DETECTION.

As days and weeks passed by, and summer faded into early autumn, it became more and more evident that Frank Huntingdon's health was too fragile to flourish in an English climate. Cold and damp were working their deadly effects on his lungs, and the grave physician who attended him shook his head as he said that a twelvemonth's sojourn either in Italy or the south of France, would be the only thing likely to benefit the invalid. It was with sad hearts that his parents heard this decision, but there was no appeal from it, and as soon as preliminaries could be arranged Mrs. Huntingdon started for the "Sunny South" with Frank, leaving her husband to follow her as soon as business arrangements could be made. It was planned that she should take up her residence at Mentone permanently for a twelvemonth, while Mr. Huntingdon would go to and fro as business permitted.

But we must leave Frank and his doings, to see how George Smyth and Charlie Hobbs fared. Charlie's *quasi* concealment was productive of many awkward *contretemps* to each of them. It might not have been the case had not Charlie clung to George with such persistence and determination, but it was sorely against George's will that this was so. He knew that he dared detection daily, and indeed invited it, for though Charlie wore fresh clothes as a sort of disguise, he was not so much altered but that a searching glance might have seen through the disguise. Mr. Vincent was ever on the look-out for any link which might serve to

connect George with the thief, for, with his usual astuteness, he refused to believe that Charlie Hobbs had so completely taken himself off as to be beyond the reach of detection. More than once, twice, or thrice he had, unknown to anybody, watched George's comings and goings at night, and with the result of being confirmed in his suspicions. After this his footsteps were watched by somebody with more power to act.

It is only fair to Charlie to say that he had learned to be industrious and frugal in the new phase of life which had fallen to his share. His present employment was not over remunerative, but he subsisted almost on bread and water in order to attain the end he had set himself. Knowing but too well that England was forfeited to him by his crime, he had set himself the task of saving enough money, together with what George should bring him, to defray the expenses of his voyage to America. Whether it were Canada or the United States, he cared not much, provided he could get away from Liverpool, and from the knowledge of any who were likely to do him harm. By means of George, communication had been opened between him and his friends, and they were willing to help him off. "And the sooner the better," said Charlie when George conveyed him this piece of news.

George thought so too, as he proceeded one dark, gusty evening on his mission to Charlie. By dint of hard saving, and making much pretension to sundry small extravagances, he had managed to gain several shillings, which he was conveying to Charlie. It sorely pinched him, but he rejoiced in the thought that it would soon be over, and then—but not till then—he would be free. As he turned the last corner into the dingy court where Charlie was domiciled he quite chuckled with joy to think that by that day week,

if all went well, Charlie would be on the broad blue ocean, devoutly wishing and hoping too that he might never be permitted to set eyes on him again.

But, unseen and unsuspected by George, a man stood at this very corner, habited in a loose brown great-coat and wideawake hat, with dingy boots and dirty corduroy trousers. In appearance he looked like a scavenger, or costermonger, taking his evening repose. A short pipe was in his mouth, and his slouching gait seemed to bespeak the utmost indifference to everything and everybody. But it was not so; he was a detective, habited thus to solve the mysterious connection which existed between the two boys; and as George passed him almost contemptuously, he smiled knowingly to himself, muttering as he did so, "All right, my fine fellow; you little think I'm watching you so nicely." Just then the man coughed; but it was a crazy, crackling kind of cough, and for a moment George turned his head as if endeavouring to recall to himself when and where he had heard it before. At last it struck him that a strange man, in shabby-genteel clothes, had visited the office once or twice lately, with just such a cough as that; but on looking again he could trace no manner of resemblance in the two men, and reassuring himself he passed on again. It would have been well for him had he turned back.

As George went on, up the dirty dark stairs, to the door of Charlie's room, his mind almost revolted at the idea of continuing this connection; and he came to the conclusion that if Charlie were not out of the country by the time proposed, he himself would invent some excuse to leave Liverpool.

Charlie was inside, busy sewing on buttons and doing general repairs, where needed, to his clothes. He had had no mother to take this work and do it for him ever since

the day on which he started from the office; and though now his friends were going to provide two decent suits of apparel for him to take on board, he had been taught by a bitter experience not to despise shabby clothes. His hands had become as familiar with needle and thread in his hiding, as in former times they had been with cigars and betting-lists. Perhaps it was the development of these better qualities in him which had secured George's sympathy. There was a little excuse in his favouring Charlie, although at the same time acting a traitor's part to those before whom he had professed penitence and allegiance. But it was not to continue—nor even to succeed. Unseen and unheard by either of the lads, the shabby-looking, slouching stranger had followed George very warily and quietly up the garret stairs.

"Sewing, Charlie? You've learnt a great many queer things, I should say, since you've been in hiding."

"I should think I have. Didn't our old copy-books say, 'Necessity is the mother of invention?' I'm sure I've found it so many a time lately. I didn't know how to live on a shilling a week, until necessity compelled me to do so."

"But you don't want to repeat the lesson, I should think?"

"Not I. And what's more, I won't. By hook or by crook I'll be free of this wretched life before another fortnight, and then catch me if you can. I'll snap my fingers in the faces of the whole lot of them. But I'll keep clear of meddling with other people's pies; see if I don't. I've burnt my fingers enough over this one. I hope you haven't come without money?"

"No," replied George. "I've scraped and scraped for you as I never did for myself, and all the time in mortal fear of the consequences. I hope it will soon be over; I can't stand it much longer."

"Nor I. I mean just to see 'the old folks at home' once more, some night this week, when my passage is secure, and then embark for New York. It won't be with many tears that I shall wish Liverpool farewell. You didn't tell me how much you had."

"A little over twelve shillings. Will that make up sufficient?"

"Yes, I think. I've had all I can at home, pretty well, but father promised me another ten shillings if I hadn't enough."

"Well, then, you'd better have it," returned George. "I'm sure I've been peeled so bare, what with helping you to live and making up money for your emigration, that I can bring no more. I'm clean done now. I hope you will get off safely, and, to be fair with you, I shall be very glad when the ship steers out of port,—provided you are on board."

"Ah!" returned Charlie musingly, "'there's many a slip between the cup and the lip,' some folks say, but I don't think it will hold good in this case."

"Won't it, young fellow?" responded a gruff voice, and the slouching, shabby-looking stranger was in the lad's room even while he spoke. "Wait a bit."

The two lads' faces wore an expression of the most abject misery, and Charlie's especially that of blank despair. They were livid with terror, and as to stirring hand or foot by way of escape, it was completely beyond their power. They were as thoroughly immovable as any cataleptic patient you ever read of.

"You are Charles Hobbs, for whom the firm of Dudley and Hope have been looking for the past few months; and now that I've got you, I sha'n't be for letting you go in a hurry. As for you, George Smyth, I shall take care to

represent what I have heard and seen to-night in the proper quarter. It is a question if you will not be liable to a conviction for aiding and abetting your friend."

As the stern detective—for he it was—said this, the bright prospects of deliverance, in which both the lads had indulged for so long, vanished like a wreath of mist in the morning sun, and destruction,—utter destruction,—and discomfiture frowned upon them.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A FELON'S CELL.

"Now then, young fellow, you'll come with me," continued the stern detective, who had by this time cast off all his old slouching manner, and assumed his ordinary professional decision and alacrity. "I've a warrant for your apprehension, and it may interest you to know that I've been looking for you ever since you removed to these quarters. The visits of your friend here, has helped us materially in finding you. We suspected that you were linked together, and now I've heard and seen enough to prove it."

Charlie offered no resistance while the detective fastened on the handcuffs, but remained the most perfect picture of hopeless despair which can be imagined. He was certainly to be pitied to a great extent, for he had been indulging in his dream of hope so long that the disappointment was doubly cruel; now that he was about to quaff from the cup of liberty, it was to be suddenly dashed from his lips without warning and without chance of escape. He was almost

speechless; and as for George, he seemed fairly stupefied by the turn affairs had taken.

"You may go to your own home, young man, now," said the detective, turning to George. "I told Mr. Dudley I was sure you were a traitor to them, and now that it's proved, you may depend on it I shall soon communicate with them; but you'd better put in an appearance at the office to-morrow morning. If you don't, you'll have the pleasure of being escorted there by one of our officers. When you get there, it will be for the firm to decide what shall be done."

George slunk out of the room like a dog, scarcely turning even to wish his friend "good-night." So this was the result of his merry company!—this the end of his Sabbath-breaking and betting! A sorry result indeed! George wished but too bitterly that he had never set eyes on Charlie Hobbs. That night neither of them slept much; although their outward circumstances differed, the anguish of each mind was much the same! and while George tossed in uneasy, restless self-recrimination on his couch, Charlie was the broken-spirited occupant of a felon's cell.

Next morning George dragged his weary frame to the accustomed spot, and, as he expected, found the detective there before him. *Now*, he could read the meaning of the man's former visits to the office in disguise, and he cursed his own want of suspicion in not taking the hint. As he went into the office the stern countenance of Mr. Dudley met him first, with the order to proceed at once into the inner room. He did so, and in a minute that gentleman and the detective followed. Mr. Hope was there already, but his set, determined face told him that there was no mercy for the lad who had at first helped to rob them and then betrayed them.

"My opinion of you is not shaken, but only confirmed," commenced Mr. Dudley, as he faced George. "I believed you to be a thief, and now I know it. You not only aided and abetted that other young scamp in his dishonesty, but even after you pretended to make a confession, turned round and befriended him again. I am told that you aided him with supplies of money and clothes, right up till last evening, and that you were actually confederate with him in his emigration scheme. Is not this true?"

"It's every bit true, sir," put in Detective Simpson, laying down twelve shillings on the table. "Here's the booty that this young man conveyed to his friend last night; I don't know if any of it is your property, but it's likely enough."

"No, it isn't," burst out George. "It's all my own, every farthing of it; and I shouldn't have helped him hadn't it been that he begged so hard for one more chance, and really seemed to turn over a fresh leaf—that is, in some things. It did seem hard in me to turn my back upon him then, when he was like a hunted hound."

George spoke under the influence of strong excitement. Being fairly brought to bay, with the consciousness that it was all up with him, he seemed to care not what he said, so that he could ward off criminal disgrace. His face was flushed and wore a look of bitter determination, as he glanced at the pile of silver on the table, now so coolly taken out of his hands, and he went on, "The money is all mine; I saved, and scraped, and begged, until I got it together, for I was sick and tired of the worry. In the first place, he was almost starved, and I gave all I could spare to keep him alive. That was not so very wrong, was it? Then he wanted to go to America, but of course I couldn't take that expense upon myself; and I told him so. He had no friend beside me in all the world, and he threatened that if

I didn't help him he would drown himself rather than be given up to justice, or lead the miserable, hunted kind of life that he was leading. So what was I to do? I told him that I couldn't give him much money, and you must know, sir, that I couldn't. What little I did carry him from time to time, was sorely needed at home for my own expenses."

"Perhaps you lightened our till again to find means," put in Mr. Dudley. "It wouldn't be the first time, if you did. This twelve shillings is as much as you can earn for one week."

"So it may, sir; but I didn't help myself : your till for all that. I've had enough of that kind of thing for a lifetime, and what help I gave Charlie Hobbs during his hiding was out of my own pocket. My father has been the worse for it but not you. And though it was against my conscience to keep his secret, it would have gone sorely against me to have set the police after him, he begged so hard for another chance. I was hoping that he would soon have gone off out of the country, and then there would have been an end of it; for you know, sir, if you prosecute him to the utmost, you can never get the money."

"That may be, but we are determined to prosecute him, and you will have to give evidence against him. If we let him off we shall deserve to be robbed on every hand. Indeed, we should, most likely, seeing that our other *employees* would take every advantage."

"That's it, sir," put in the detective. "It's false policy to show mercy to such young scamps, for others may follow their bad example, unless they know punishment to be sure."

"Just so," replied Mr. Dudley. "Now you two step outside. Keep a good look-out on this lad. In ten minutes we will decide whether to charge him or not."

George felt extremely like a mouse in the power of a cat, as he stood in the office awaiting the verdict of the partners, his every movement covered by the lynx eye of the detective. Whether he should go to prison or not he could not tell, and truth to say, so miserable was he, that he was almost careless as to what became of him. Anyway, he thought his position could scarcely be worse. When alone Mr. Dudley and Mr. Hope went into the matter carefully and fully. Mr. Dudley was all in favour of prosecuting both lads, but Mr. Hope contended that they might give George another chance, so as to avoid overwhelming him with immediate ruin. It was ruin enough for him to be turned out of his employment characterless, and this they both decided was imperatively necessary; but, as Mr. Hope urged, they might cast a modicum of mercy into his lot by refraining from prosecuting him. For a long time, however, this merciful counsel was unavailing, and meanwhile George trembled like an aspen, knowing but too well how small his chances of mercy were. Ultimately, however, Mr. Hope prevailed, and then coming out of the office he told George he would be free to go or come whither he chose, on the single condition that he appeared as witness in the case when required. "And," added Mr. Hope, "as we require your services no longer, you will go at once. Only, it will be as well for you to keep your eye on him, Simpson, in case he should fail to be forthcoming at the necessary time."

"All right, sir," replied the detective.

George stayed to hear no more; hastily putting on his cap, and muttering a kind of promise to do as they required of him, he was in the street almost before he knew whether he was standing upon his head or his heels. All that he could realize just then was the fact that he had experienced a most narrow escape from a felon's lot.

Charlie's trial drew on, and long before that Mr. and Mrs. Smyth were made acquainted with their son's shortcomings. Then they could understand his professed extravagance, his mental anguish and disturbed slumbers, his late hours, and frequent demands for money; and understanding, they could not but own that this was the fit result of it all. But amid all their distraction and sorrow they felt comforted to think that their son shared not the lot of his companion. It was indeed a mercy that the stigma of *felon* could never be attached to his name. As for Charlie Hobbs' relatives, they were bowed almost to the ground beneath their load of sorrow. They exhausted their means in furnishing legal assistance for Charlie, and then, after all, they knew but too well it would not keep the miserable youth from jail. Nor did it. Charlie looked the very picture of misery as he stood in the dock to receive sentence, for his recent confinement had completed the work commenced by his former hardships. Most piteously he pleaded for mercy, and confessed before a crowded court that his derelictions from the paths of rectitude and honesty had been inaugurated by a course of Sabbath-breaking. But it was in vain. It was necessary, so the judge said, to make an example of so flagrant a transgressor, for the good of society, and with unrelenting severity he passed a sentence of imprisonment with hard labour for two years. Forgery was a serious crime, only to be met by serious punishment. Ormond was in court, and his heart sank as he looked upon Charlie's wan face, and reflected that this was all the fruit his labours had so far borne with him. His heart yearned after the poor misguided youth, and he determined to seek the requisite permission to visit him before removal to the convict establishment. As the policeman hurried Charlie away, his mother's screams rang through the court. Oh! it must be

a terrible trial to a mother, to see the son of her bosom condemned as a felon; to know that the child of her love has to bear the terrible penalty of the law; and night and day to endure in solitude the bitterness of his punishment. The poor woman was heart-broken, and her husband, although more reserved, and more stern in his sorrow, manifested the power of his emotions by the convulsive workings of his face. Scarcely less to be pitied was George, who felt the terrible ordeal of giving evidence against his late companion most acutely. It was only by strong and continued effort that he nerved himself to the miserable task, and as he left the court, when it was all over, he fairly staggered, in a state of semi-consciousness.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FRUIT OF HIS OWN WAYS.

"YOU have been much to blame."

"I know it, sir. If I had only carried out your advice I should have been spared this misery. But I didn't, so here's the end of it."

"You were both warned again and again; but somehow, it seemed as if some strange fascination were upon you, so that you could not alter your ways."

"Do you remember what you told us so many times, sir, about sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind? Well, that is just what we have done. I can see it now."

The speakers were Ormond Lee and George Smyth. It is commonly the way of the world to keep aloof from serious

advisers while enjoying life; but as soon as this jollity and gaiety brings forth sorrow, the very ones who have been sneered at, and despised because of their high adherence to principle, are sought out and confided in. So was it with George and his old teacher. The time had been when he would have walked the distance of whole streets out of his way rather than risk any communication with Ormond, but now—in disgrace and trouble—he sought him out. The dying sinner never sends for his old boon companions to comfort him, but for the humble consistent Christian, the praying teacher, or the faithful pastor. It is so in minor things. When trouble and disgrace come, sweeping away all the “refuges of lies” which have seemed so fair and comely up till then, the poor miserable worldling flies for help and encouragement to those whose ways he has envied, and whose advice he has scorned. High-flown sin and worldly-wise cunning *may* do for a time, but retribution surely comes at last, and then, those who have turned their backs on those things which are “lovely and of good report” are forced to acknowledge that godliness is not only profitable for the life that is to come, but also—and in a very high degree—for the present life. It is always so, look where you will; “righteousness exalteth” nations, families, and individuals. It is not difficult to trace the “blessing” which rests upon the house of the righteous, and it is equally easy, in many cases, to discern the “curse” in the lot of the wicked. Ormond could trace the distinctions very easily, within the narrow limits of his class. Edward Telford and Harry Gilfillan were examples of the one truth, while George and Charlie were striking specimens of the opposite. The college careers of the two students were such as to fill his heart with joy. They had acknowledged God as the “Guide of their youth.” And He in turn

was directing their ways. Ernest Osborne, although in another land, was also prospering; and from some of his recent letters home, there was good reason to hope that he had found his teacher's God. It was not all gloom for Ormond Lee in the retrospect of his work; there were many golden streaks of light there. And even Herbert Wilson—far away, among the Jack tars—was striving after his boyish fashion to “do as his teacher told him.” Faithful teachers will never labour in vain.

“You have indeed reaped the whirlwind,—Charlie especially. I almost fear that he will never survive his sentence. He seems literally ill with anxiety and disgrace.”

“And beside that, sir, he has known what hardship, hunger, and cold have meant. Nobody but myself knows what the poor fellow has gone through. It was wrong, I know, to assist him, when I had promised to help the firm in finding him, but my heart wouldn't let me go against him. I've stinted myself for him many a time; but it's no good going over that.”

“It is no good,” responded Ormond. “It is certain that you did wrong, although at the same time there is no doubt that you meant kindly.”

“Perhaps I did wrong, but it would have seemed hard to turn my back on him when he most needed a friend. At any rate, I have to suffer for it myself. I am out of a situation, and characterless into the bargain.”

“I expected that,” said Ormond. “Dudley is a hard man; it is well that you got off so easily.”

“I shouldn't, sir, if it hadn't been for Mr. Hope. He is more merciful.”

“So I have understood, George. But what do you propose doing now?”

"That is what I am come to you about, sir. I haven't a friend in the world, unless you can help me. As I've no character, I dare not seek another situation; and I can't be kept without work. Oh! it is hard."

" 'The way of transgressors is hard,' George. The old book told you that years ago."

George was silent, but his too faithful memory reminded him how often he had laughed at his teacher, in his palmy days, for enforcing this truth. It was unpalatable then, but *now* it was like the thrusting through him of a sword to quote it. He knew it but too surely.

"Do you expect me to help you into something?" Ormond continued.

"That is my object in coming, sir. If you don't, nobody else can or will, and I'm bound to go to the bad."

"I hope not; but it is, I must own, difficult for any one who has been once detected in dishonest practices to regain their lost position. I scarcely see how I can help you."

"Could you give me any chance in your own employment, sir?"

"I can hardly do that, for you know that the business is not mine, but my father's. I could speak to him on your behalf, but beyond that I could scarcely promise anything."

"I wouldn't mind what it was;—porter, messenger, or even office-boy, provided I could do something to regain my character," pleaded George.

"What were your position and salary at Dudley and Hope's?" inquired Ormond.

"I was junior clerk; but a great many duties, not properly my own, fell to my lot. I had the care of the petty cash-box, and to that fact I trace part of my ruin. My salary was very low, however, for such a post—only about thirty pounds a year."

"Well, I'll think what I can do for you," replied Ormond. "I must consult my father about it; and if I do succeed, even then I shall not, I fear, be able to help you to more than a porter's or a messenger's situation. It will be like beginning at the bottom of the ladder again."

"I don't care for that, sir," replied George, "if I can only begin. I've learnt too bitter a lesson from this, ever to be guilty of anything more of the same sort."

"I hope so; but remember, George, that reformation, to be thorough, must begin at the heart. Outside improvement is very apt to fail, if tested. Opinions and principles must be remodelled if you mean to bring out a new man."

"If you only knew what I've gone through, sir, you'd never doubt me again. I've tasted the *bitterness* of wrongdoing too much to dabble with that kind of thing again."

"I don't wish to prejudge you, George. I wouldn't on any account do such a thing, because I should discourage you; but I am borne out by the Bible in what I say. 'Out of the heart proceedeth' all things of which you have been guilty; and if you mean to turn over a new leaf, there must be a radical change of heart; the 'inner man' must be 'renewed.' You may say that this condition is a hard one. It is hard, I admit; but remember that the condition is not mine, but God's."

George had food for sober meditation when he left Ormond that night. It would be superfluous to say that he blamed himself for his folly; his vain regrets completely filled his mind. Yet Ormond could not withstand pitying him—he was so worn and ill. Nothing, I suppose, tells on the health and spirits like worry and disgrace. These things turn life into a daily burden, sweet into bitter, and all pleasant things into gall and wormwood; while the spirit is weighed down with a sense of brooding woe from which it cannot flee.

Such a burden saps the foundations of health and strength, drives the roses from the cheeks, and robs the spirits of all elasticity. It was telling sorely upon George Smyth; he was no longer the stout, good-humoured, easy-going youth of old; but, wan, thin, and restless, with at times a deep hectic flush upon his cheeks, he looked the miserable ghost of his former self. Although he had borne no legal penalty for his misdeeds, he had suffered a heavy punishment; and at times, Cain-like, he was almost tempted to say, "My punishment is more than I can bear." But he was not hardened; and in that fact there lay hope for his future. You can anticipate no good of a youth who has only grown hardened by his past faults; indeed it is most likely that he will go from bad to worse, until he sinks into irremediable ruin. George Smyth was conscience-stricken and penitent; he would have given worlds to have retraced the doings of the past twelve months; but as that could not be done, he did the next best thing in trying to begin afresh. He had a new character to win and the memory of the old one to blot out. Could he but secure admission to Mr. Lee's establishment, he felt determined to accomplish it. Ormond was willing to aid him too; and ultimately he was engaged, though at first in a menial situation and at a low salary. He must prove himself faithful in little things before he could be intrusted with "much." And so it always is—whether it be in the mean affairs of this life, or in the grander discipline of God's kingdom.

CHAPTER XXV.

TWO YEARS LATER.

YOU don't know much as yet about Hugh Blake and his home. Although by disposition and training the most daring and warlike member of Ormond's class, hitherto Hugh's home-surroundings had kept him, to a certain degree, free from the contaminating influence of wicked companions. He had lost his father in infancy. But since that time Hugh had been regarded with paternal love by his old grandfather, who resided with them, and Mrs. Blake strove to be all that a mother should be to her only child. The old veteran, who was over eighty years of age, delighted to sit by the fire and "fight his battles o'er again," with Hugh for a listener; and it was partly in consequence of this that Hugh exhibited such a predilection for a soldier's life. Had he consulted his own will alone, he would have enlisted at the earliest allowable age, but his mother's entreaties had prevailed so far as to induce him to be bound apprentice to the trade of a carpenter. He had made creditable progress in his calling, but simultaneously with his release from his apprenticeship—which, by previous arrangement, terminated at nineteen—he announced his wish to be permitted to go to Canada. Canada was then attracting great numbers of emigrants; work was abundant, and land cheap, and there seemed every prospect of Hugh's succeeding, if he went; but his mother felt almost stunned, and her heart gave a great throb as she contemplated the possibility of being left solitary.

"Canada!" interrupted the old man; "what are you talking about, Hugh?"

"Why, only going there," returned Hugh, looking just a little nonplussed. "It's a splendid country, as I've been told, and indeed I've been reading up about it lately: just the place for a fellow to get on in."

"But you would leave me alone, Hugh," put in Mrs. Blake. "What shall I do without my lad? I can't spare you—indeed I can't."

"Now, mother, don't be silly over me," said Hugh. "Why, you'll have grandfather to look after, and to keep you company; and if he should die, I will come and fetch you over. Don't you think it would be nice to have a little mother in my Canadian home?"

"Ah! but I can't spare you, my lad, I can't. You are the very image of your poor father—just what he was at your age, and if you go away I feel as if I should die."

"Don't say that, Hannah," said the old man. "You must expect young men to be young men, and to want to see the world a little. It was so in my youth, and will be to the end, I suppose. Tell us all about it, Hugh. What has made you think of Canada?"

Old Mr. Logan was Mrs. Blake's father, and still exercised a little authority over her as his child.

Thereupon the young man sat down, and very quietly, but with very cool determination, gave a full account of the matter. With patience he corrected all the old man's mistakes and misunderstandings, and combated his mother's objections, and then it appeared that Canada had been a darling dream of his for many months. He had stifled back his martial aspirations in obedience to his mother's wishes; but in secret he had dwelt on emigrating to the Far West, until the hope had become almost part and parcel of his

ing. Hugh knew, too, that his resolve would wring his mother's heart with anguish; so, boy like, he kept it back as long as he could, and then blurted it out with the most stressing bluntness. Mrs. Blake felt as if she would faint; pierced her like a sword to think that her boy—her Hugh—was going away, and now, too, just as she was beginning to hope that she had heard the last of his soldierly prelections and was learning slowly to lean upon him, as a parent who is going downhill in life does lean on a darling child. She turned so pale and looked so strange, that Hugh stopped short in his glowing narration, and said:

"Why, mother, what's the matter? You won't say *no* to this plan surely?"

"I don't know, Hugh. Don't press me just now, for I'm afraid I sha'n't agree to it. You are the light of my eyes, and you must imagine what a bitter sorrow it will be to lose you."

"I don't know, mother," returned Hugh, looking down and kicking the chair with his foot. "I thought lads of my age could have a little choice of their own. You can't expect a fellow to be tied up to his mother's apron-strings all his life. Suppose I should get married, would you expect me to stay home with you?"

"No, Hugh. But emigration to Canada is like death to most. I shall never see you again, once you leave me."

"Pooh, mother! you don't know what you are talking about. It is only about a fortnight's voyage, and I could come home at any time. And if I don't come home, I can write to you, every fortnight, at least. It's only women who make such a fuss over these things. And out of the wages I shall earn there, I shall be able to send you enough money to keep you like a lady."

Hugh was all promises and protestations, but Mrs. Blake

was all tears and sighs. Her father had been a soldier in his earlier days—and indeed all through the prime of his early manhood—so that she could remember the heart-achings and the loneliness felt by her mother and the other members of the family, when the husband and father was absent on foreign duty. The repetition of this in the case of her son was more than she could endure, even although he should be engaged in free handicraft. Mr. Logan saw nothing very strange in Hugh's wish, nor very improper in his desire; but as he felt for his daughter, he hardly knew what to say. He was fond of adventure in his youth, and the disposition had been perpetuated in his grandson. Besides, he was almost childish, and little company for any one—almost nothing but a care and trouble. Once you could start him on some reminiscence of his youth he would become garrulous and sometimes interesting; but as a rule he would chatter away aimlessly about the time when he was a boy. He was going on now, but a little more sensibly than on some occasions.

"Ay, ay, it was just so in my time; sons wanted to see the world, and mothers wanted to keep them at home. I remember when I was going into the army, how my mother begged and cried over me; but there, she got over it in time. Oh! I was a wild lad then—a wild lad. But I don't know about Canada. They tell me it's a country of forests. Our Hugh ain't much cut out for farming. Felling trees and ploughing ground is too hard for him. Never saw a plough in his life, I don't expect. Wonder what he thinks he'll do?"

And so the old man prattled on, with his face to the fire—stooping over it, and rubbing his hands with evident relish—This was his favourite employment even in warm weather—Second childhood always creeps over the fire: artificial heat

must give the comfort that vigorous limbs and young warm blood used to supply.

Hugh was so worried that he was almost at a stand-still. He didn't like the idea of troubling his mother's heart, but Canada was his dearest dream, and he resolved to win her over to his project somehow or other. Under the circumstances he decided that he would walk out for a few minutes, to tranquillize his thoughts. So, putting on his hat, he went out, but had not gone far when he met Ormond. He could not have met a better friend, and in the fulness of his heart he told the project to his old teacher. For more than a twelvemonth, now, Hugh had declined attendance at the Sabbath-school, but the closest affection ever bound together the lad and his teacher. It was a tie which would not be quickly severed.

"I don't wonder at Mrs. Blake's sorrow," was Ormond's first word. "It will almost break her heart, she is so fond and so proud of you. Do you really feel called upon to go to Canada, Hugh?"

"Yes, I do," returned Hugh. "I wanted much to be a soldier, but mother wouldn't let me, and in obedience to her wishes I tamed myself down to a five years' apprenticeship to the carpenter's bench, though I wasn't happy by any means. And now I cannot chain myself at home any longer. I suppose it's in the blood. I think I'm much like grandfather was when he was my age. I feel as if I should pine away if I were pent up in this city any longer. The glorious freedom of Canada for me!"

And great, tall, strapping fellow that he was, he looked the very picture of what a settler should be. His muscles were well-developed, and the fire of healthy energy glowed in his face. Ormond thought he was just the right sort of one to prosper in Canada, but he mentally doubted

whether to advise him to go or not. The thought of Mrs. Blake's trouble would rise up before him.

"I can't say what to advise, Hugh," said Ormond. "Why don't you wait a little while, and see how things go at home? Changes may occur which may make your scheme more practicable, and in twenty ways, unforeseen at present, your way may be opened up more easily."

"*Waiting* is about the worst thing that I can do, sir," rejoined Hugh. "I remember once, when I was a boy, I sprained my foot. Well, the pain was bad enough, but the lying still was worse, forty times over. I never had any patience, never shall, I'm afraid. I fretted and fumed then as long as I was indoors, until I was as white and as thin as could be; and so I shall now, if I cannot go."

* * * * *

However, Hugh eventually carried the day, and sailed for Canada. It was a sore day for Mrs. Blake as she watched her only boy off, and even old Logan missed Hugh enough to fret for him. But he was pledged to his mother to write home every fortnight, and in case of his grandfather's death to hasten home; and these promises afforded some slight mitigation of the separation. Hugh was full of other schemes too, about sending home remittances, and so on. How he fulfilled these schemes we shall have to tell another time.

CHAPTER XXVI

WESTWARD, HO!

THE strife and turmoil of civil war raged in the American States, and the clash of arms and struggle of conflict were invading the brightest districts of that fair land. The struggle between freedom and slavery was waxing hot, and, giant-like, the Goliath of bondage was making the most tremendous efforts for the supremacy. Dismay sat on Mr. Lee's countenance, for thousands of pounds of his hard-won wealth were at stake, and indeed it was questionable whether ruin had not already begun for that branch of the business. Southern daring and Southern pride had taken the sword in hand, and the sword was eventually to decide whether the traffic in human beings should continue. The first shot at Fort Sumter had been followed by the most bloody engagements. Trade was stagnating, and commerce at a stand-still, while the whole land groaned and suffered under the most terrible scourge which it could possibly endure. Speculators were growing rich on plunder, and long-established houses of business were being overcome by total ruin. It seemed likely that all the advantage gained in past years by Mr. Lee, in the New York branch of his concern, was about to fade like a summer dream, and this could not be without to some extent imperilling the fortune of his English business. Some one must go to New York, and that speedily, to avert the ruin that seemed impending.

"Ormond, you must go," said the old gentleman one evening, as they sat discussing the matter. "There is no help for it; you must go out to save the whole concern from

being wrecked, if you can. If you cannot do that, you may at least save part."

"I can scarcely expect to do more than save a part," returned Ormond. "If all the clerks are out in the war, it would seem madness to do anything, in fact, but close it for a time, until things right themselves."

"Well, well, if that is all you can do, you must just do it. All their heads seem to have been turned by the passion for war." News had come that all the *employés*, with the exception of one who ranked among the "halt and the maimed," had started off to join their fellow-citizens in the strife. The *furor* of battle had entered every heart, and wives gave their husbands, fathers their sons, sisters their brothers, and the State its citizens, to enter the lists.

"Never mind," was Ormond's rejoinder, "if we have to close the warehouse for a time, so that the right triumphs. To us it is simply a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence, but to the slave it is freedom and life."

"Yes, yes," returned Mr. Lee; "but I hope it will soon be over. It seems to me simply horrible that brothers should go to war, men of one nation, because they cannot agree on a matter of public policy. A fratricidal war like this is about the worst that one can imagine, and many an Englishman whose bread will be gone from him for a time, for want of cotton, will sigh and pine for peace at any price."

"Let the cotton go for ever, father, so that slavery is abolished! No one man on God's earth has the right to enthrall another. And I think Englishmen will stand by and quietly suffer, before they will consent to hinder this important struggle."

"Ah! you were always an enthusiast, Ormond," laughed Mr. Lee. "It wouldn't do for us all to be as crack-brained

as you are. But the point to be considered is this: is it possible for you to get to New York with speed and safety?"

"I must try it. Of course I will run all risks, and trust to God's providence for guidance and protection."

"Captain Aylmer was telling me this morning that the recruiting officers were at work in every port of the United States at present open to vessels, entrapping young men as soon as they landed, and enticing them upon various pretences into the army. Men are tempted by offers of high bounty, and he hinted that if persuasion did not succeed, force did. There is no doubt, so it seems, that hundreds of unwilling emigrants are drafted into the Northern army."

"I am not particularly anxious for the honour," returned Ormond. "Still, I don't think it unbecoming for a Christian man to fight in a just war, if need arise."

"Ah! but, Ormond, you must manage better than to do that," said the old gentleman hastily. "I don't want you to fight! indeed, the whole concern had better go, than that."

"Never mind that, father; if duty points me to New York, I will go. You will see me back again safely, I've no doubt. Captain Aylmer will not be frightening me away from my duty."

"Well, it must be so, I suppose," said the old gentleman, after a pause—"it must be so; but I'd have it otherwise, just now, if I could. The best thing you can do is to shut up the whole concern and lie by very quietly until peace is proclaimed. Peace will be proclaimed some day, I suppose, and then you will have to do your best to resuscitate the business. The capital invested out there musn't be allowed to sink. That will never do!"

"That is just the course I should elect to take. I could not carry it on single-handed; and indeed, seeing the export

trade to be almost at a stand-still, it would be worse than useless to attempt to keep the thing going just now."

With Mr. Lee, or his son, to decide, was to do. Next morning Ormond's passage was taken, and within forty-eight hours thereafter he was on board the *Nestor*, steaming out of the Mersey. Had there been time he would have communicated with Ernest Osborne, but there was not. Indeed, sailing as he was on one of the fleetest steamers then voyaging between Liverpool and New York, it was most probable that he would arrive even before a letter. As to recruiting-sergeants, and the like, he never entertained an idea. It was his duty to go, and go he did. Soldiering had no charms for him, and he smiled to himself as he contemplated the figure he should cut, shouldering a rifle, or digging a trench.

Meantime Edward Telford was getting on beyond the most sanguine expectations of his friends. He had passed through two years of his college career with satisfaction, and even with honour. His frailty of health,—for it was frail, in spite of his asseverations of strength,—was not allowed to interpose a barrier between him and the goal towards which he had set his face. His was one of those determined spirits consecrated to a great work. And to all suggestions of ease, expediency, or languor, he said resolutely—perhaps too resolutely—"Hinder me not." The only relaxation which he ever allowed himself was a few hours or days spent occasionally in the company of the Lees. Indeed, Ormond and Edward were more like brothers than anything else. The old distinction of teacher and scholar had long ago died out in the equality of close friendship: and because of Ormond, the younger members of the family learned to love Edward. His deep, clear insight into human nature, the varied character of his acquirements, and

his quiet, unassuming manner, endeared him to them all. To Ada he was all the world; the first fond allegiance of her heart had never been withdrawn, but had beautified and intensified into a warmer love. At first she had borne a large amount of coolness and displeasure from some members of her family for having "thrown herself away on a poor student." But lately, fortune had dawned on the "poor student," in the shape of a legacy from an old maiden aunt, and after completing his college course he intended to proceed to Cambridge to spend another three years in study, previous to ordination. There is a certain *prestige* attaching to university culture, which never fails to secure for a man a good amount of consideration and respect. On this account also the Lees had accorded to Edward more kindness than of yore. As for Ada, her mind was made up: "poor student" or not, Edward Telford was the king of her heart; while, for his part, he regarded Ada with the fondest idolatry of a truthful and chivalrous nature. With Ada's love it seemed to him that he could face any prospect; and when the news of his aunt's legacy reached him, though it cheered his heart, he rejoiced most of all because it furnished him with the means of winning a noble fame and thus becoming more worthy of her. Ada was blessed in possessing the love of such a man; it was better than silver or gold. But it had not always been sunshine with them, nor was it to continue, if some people could prevent it. The world never lacks busybodies and mischief-makers—least of all in love affairs.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MRS. HUNTINGDON'S INTERFERENCE.

"Believe me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent,
The grand old gardener and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."—TENNYSON.

"I CAN never believe it! It is not like papa to sanction this engagement! Beside which, Ada, you were always his darling daughter, and no end of bright visions have been woven for you at one time and another. I really think papa would choose a prince for you if he could, and now, to get entangled in this low connection!"

"It is not a low connection, Alice. I believe you think everything low which is not emblazoned with gold. Do you imagine that all 'the excellent of the earth' are wealthy? If so, then you must worship all wealthy people; but, unfortunately for that doctrine, you and I know some who, although millionaires, or nearly so, are simply execrable in their character and conduct."

"Of course; but this man has no relations to speak of. They would not be presentable in society, and once you married into his family you would be simply ignored by all our present acquaintances."

"Well, when I do that, I shall just take the liberty of ignoring them first; and then we will betake ourselves to some place where we can make our own society."

"That is already pretty certain, seeing that Edward Tel-

Ford only aspires to being settled over some village congregation. And between farmers and labourers, the rotation of crops, and hard times, will be about all you will find to engage your attention. A nice prospect, certainly, for a young lady accustomed to fashionable town life."

"I cannot understand you, Alice. You seem to look at everything with such mercenary feelings. I believe you worship the golden calf—indeed you must, or you would not talk so."

Ada Lee spoke rather pettishly, and, under the circumstances, one could not wonder. Mrs. Huntingdon had always set her face against Ada's friendship with Edward Telford, but since her return from Mentone she had lost no opportunity of speaking out boldly and sharply against it. By this time, as we said in our last chapter, the intimacy had ripened into love, and an engagement followed, but not without strenuous opposition on the part of Mrs. Huntingdon. The conversation with which our chapter opens took place some three months previous to the date of our last chapter, and was only a sample of many such. The sparring between the sisters would sometimes grow fast and furious; but ordinarily speaking it was restrained within due bounds by the innate sense of propriety which characterized each, though manifested in different ways. Neither of them would ever condescend to quarrel—that is, in the common acceptance of the term; but their views were so totally opposed on the subjects in dispute that some very sharp things were occasionally said. Mrs. Huntingdon, with a sisterly sort of feeling, desired to see Ada "well married;" and as, in her view, riches and rank covered a multitude of sins, therefore riches and rank were the things most truly needful. Ada, on the other hand, had been led to adopt larger views of life, and to weigh more nicely and evenly

the distinctions between character and station, conduct and possessions, than of yore; consequently her views on some subjects were to her more worldly-minded sister, startlingly radical, simple, or perverted. The intimacy with Edward Telford, both on her brother's part and Ada's, had been always a bone of contention between Mrs. Huntingdon and them, her aristocratic tastes scorning such plebeian associates.

"I worship no golden calf, Ada; but that, I believe, is a favourite sneer with your set. For all that, however, I decline to mix up with the people whom you and Ormond so much affect. It is not worth while to lower one's *status* in society. Young Telford may contemplate a university course, and for this I respect him, but the plebeian taint will ever be upon him. You know our family came in with the Conquest."

"And now we rank among traders," put in Ada roughly.

"Not exactly that. Papa is one of the merchant princes of Liverpool, and so is Mr. Huntingdon. We are not in the class of traders in the common acceptance of the term."

"Well, if we are not common traders and shopkeepers, we get our money by merchandise, which is only an extended form of trading. And as to boasting that our family came in with the Conqueror, I should rather feel glad to hold my peace on that little episode, seeing that William and his Normans were a band of robbers and cruel oppressors. No great honour that, to be counted among such a rapacious horde!"

Mrs. Huntingdon looked simply shocked. The idea of tracing her descent from the Norman, had always seemed to her unanswerable; but to hear these ancient worthies

stigmatized as "thieves" and "robbers," was more than she had bargained for.

"Ada Lee, I am ashamed of you! There is not a titled aristocrat in the three kingdoms but is proud to trace his descent from the Norman Conquest! You must have taken leave of your senses! Don't you see that it proves the long respectability and antiquity of one's family We are not of mushroom growth!"

Ada thought within herself that if Edward Telford were there, he would quietly murmur, "All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field. For a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night;" but she felt that she could not summon courage to quote Scripture like that. And more, it would be lost on her time-serving, worldly-scheming sister. So, trusting to her woman's wit, she took up the cudgels again.

"Nobody is of mushroom growth, Alice, in the sense you mean; for Adam and Eve were the common progenitors of us all, and those who can trace their descent back for ever so many generations are most likely to have been those branches of his family who believed and acted upon the

"'Good old rule, the simple plan,
That they should get who have the power,
And they should keep who can.'

Not a very enviable distinction that, as far as I am aware. Honest, quiet, peace-loving people are the most likely ones to have lost their pedigrees. I wonder how Adam would regard all this squabbling about ancestry, if he could be cognisant of it to-day? Don't you think he would laugh at us all, as he remembered that you and your scullery-maid, the king and the bond-slave, were all of one blood? You remind me of the old Welshman, who, on hearing a neigh-

bour boast that he could trace his pedigree back to the flood, replied by showing a chart which, after giving an account of the wonderful doings of some of the early ancestors of his family, exhibited a footnote, stating that 'about this time the world was created.'

"That is enough, Ada," replied Mrs. Huntingdon with a gesture of supreme contempt. "I have heard more than enough. You are even tinged with radicalism. Do you know that on this question it is very easy to step from the sublime to the ridiculous?"

"I do know it; and nobody ever appears more ridiculous than when attempting to extort respect by boasting of the antiquity of his, or her, descent. I believe that some people would like to see the first two chapters of Genesis blotted out, in their rage for genealogical antiquity."

"Well, I will not press the subject any further. At least, however, you will allow that long generations of culture will produce an aristocracy of which the country may be proud, while, on the other hand, vice and vulgarity reproduce themselves."

"Yes, to a certain extent I will allow that. But you must admit that small hands and feet, and polished manners, do not entirely make a gentleman. Neither vice nor virtue is hereditary. You will allow that an upright poor man is better by far than a dishonest rich one. God's aristocrats are oftener found in the field, the factory, and the mine, than in the court and the camp. He looks only at the nobility to be found in a man's soul, and if it is there it receives his approbation, despite outward surroundings."

"Really you are getting quite oratorical! Is this the fruit of your intimacy with Edward Telford? I should think, from what you say, that he is one of the brightest specimens of this sort of nobility."

"You are right, Alice. He is."

Mrs. Huntingdon looked up, considerably nonplussed at his quiet, ready assertion. She had not expected such a lesson, much less such persistence in bringing it home. She mentally resolved to talk to Mr. Lee on the subject, and hear his opinion. However, she commenced again:

"I should not be so wrathful on the matter were it not that I consider that Sunday-school teaching to have been at the bottom of all this nonsense. Ormond has indoctrinated you with these opinions, and where they will lead you I do not know."

"Don't trouble, sister," replied Ada gaily. "I will take the responsibility; see if I don't come out as well off as you in the end. Where is Frank? I must have a romp with him for a little while, before dark. Don't be afraid that I shall make him a red republican! But I shall write to Edward on the subject in dispute, and ask him to treat me to his views on high birth generally."

It spoke much for the dispositions of both sisters, that, however much they might differ in their views on any subject, they would generally, in the end, agree to do so amicably. Frank was a common bond of affection between them, and his frail health strengthened the tenderness of the bond. Since returning from Mentone he had been certainly stronger and brighter, but still the worm was at the root, and every little recurrence of indisposition proved how exceedingly weak he was. Next to Ormond, he loved Ada, and a quiet gambol with her was a treat. Frank was now growing up into the thoughtful period of a boy's life—that time when you may teach him and talk to him in such a way that the remembrance of your teaching shall colour all his after life. His illness had made him very thoughtful and pensive—"queer," his mamma said; but the queerness

possessed a rare attraction for Ormond, and almost the worst pang which he felt in his projected trip to America was that connected with leaving Frank.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"ONLY EDWARD AFTER ALL."

ADA LEE sat in her own room, looking anxious, worn, and weary. The merry eyes were full of tears; a pen was held listlessly in her hand, and writing materials were spread out before her. True to her resolution, Mrs. Huntingdon had attacked Mr. Lee on the subject of the intimacy between Ada and Edward Telford, and succeeded in laying the matter before him in such a disagreeable light that a domestic broil was the result. Mr. Lee had hitherto remained very passive in the matter, regarding Edward Telford as an estimable young man, but wondering somewhat at Ada's partiality for him in preference to other suitors. Mr. Lee was too sensible to deny to any of his children the right of choice—that is, within certain limits; but had he been consulted in the matter it is more than probable that he would have recommended a more worldly choice. Success is a great inducement to men who live by money-making; and many a rising young merchant would have sued for the hand of Ada Lee; while, on the other hand, the faculty of getting on in life would have recommended any young man to her father, without any nice inquiry into his moral character. Therefore, while not absolutely forbidding the intimacy between Edward and

Ada, he would much rather have been asked to give his sanction to an engagement likely to have been more advantageous in point of worldly wealth. By this, it may be easily understood how the affection of the young people for each other was only tacitly permitted instead of being openly encouraged. And Mrs. Huntingdon's outspoken disapproval encouraged Ada's younger sisters in criticising with offensive pertness the foolishness of a girl who could be so content to wait for years, and then have "only Edward after all."

"And if it be 'only Edward, after all,' that I marry," pondered Ada, as she nibbled unconsciously at her pen, "he is better and truer than any half-dozen of the others. Melton, and Lockwood and Nugent are all well enough in their way, but it is simply ridiculous to think that I can love them. And I believe that the chief attraction to each of them is the hope of having some of papa's wealth. Of course anybody can pretend to love the daughter of a rich man. I know Edward does not care for money; he would rather that I had none. And as to position, he believes that it is properly his work to achieve a position for me. But it is hard, when Nellie and Julia boast about their suitors, to have them look across at me in such a half-pitying, half-sneering kind of way, and say, 'It is only Edward.' And if I get a letter from him, and Alice knows it, she will pretend to be surprised that I 'keep up that silly correspondence.' It is wrong and unjust! Oh, dear! what a weary world this is! I will tell Edward all about it, and then I will leave the matter in his hands."

And so, after turning the subject over and over again, Ada sat down and wrote her own characteristic version of the whole matter to Edward. It was a miserable task, but the poor girl felt that if any one had power to free her from

the "distasteful" engagement it must be him,—and him alone,—who had sought the promise. She did not think that he would do so—indeed, she felt certain that Edward Telford would be the last one in the world either to break his pledge or allow her to break hers; but still the matter should be referred to him, and she would abide by his decision. If he saw fit to withdraw, or give her liberty to withdraw, she would quietly acquiesce; but if he held her to her pledge, then she determined to be as true as steel.

Hers was a difficult path at that time, and only scantily gilded with sunshine. It was hard, day after day to try to practise the law of kindness, when subjected to the most trying coldness and mischievous interference. Mrs. Huntingdon meant it very well, no doubt, but some people have a queer way of doing things, even when they mean them for the good of those whom they torment. Ada had learned a little of the true Bible morality, and her innate purity of principle had been greatly strengthened and developed by her association with Edward. It was her consolation and pride to walk in such steps as were most like his: possibly, in imitating the disciple, she was omitting to look at the Master; but to how many of us would not the same rebuke apply? Is not human love at times the most powerful incentive with us all? Is not the heart sometimes satisfied with the moral or spiritual beauty of the object which it sees, to the exclusion of that diviner beauty which ought to be ever our ideal? And so it came to pass that Ada was seeking to tread the way of life more for love of her teacher, than for the love of Christ.

Not many days passed before a familiar knock heralded Edward's entrance. On being admitted he said to the servant, "Where is Miss Ada? Shall I find her in the drawing-room?"

"No, sir; but I believe she is in the summer-house."

"That will do, then. You need not inform any one that I am here. I will seek her myself."

The summer-house was a quaint rustic structure at one end of the small lawn, where Ada, with the other girls, was accustomed to read, draw, or do fancy-work in the dreamy hours of the day. As it fortunately happened, Ada was there alone, just then, looking very much preoccupied as she bent over her embroidery—too preoccupied to hear the quick, cautious footstep which approached from behind. Before she could look up, a warm pair of hands were pressed over her eyes, and a series of kisses imprinted on her face, as she struggled to see who the intruder was.

"Edward! it is not you!"

"It's my own very self, and not my ghost, as the fleshy grasp of my hands may convince you. I am come down to see what all this fuss is about; I couldn't write about it, dearest, and so I got leave of absence for two days. Now, once for all, I shall not give you up. Did you think I could?"

"I didn't know, Edward. They wished me to give you up, and I told them that I had no right to break my promise, as long as you kept me to it."

"They! Whom do you mean by 'they,' dearest?"

"My sisters more especially. Papa is partly of their mind, but I think mamma has a little more consideration for me. Still, as none of them expected any such thing as an engagement between you and me, they seem to rebel at the thought of the whole thing, now that it is a reality."

"But I wrote to your papa, honourably, and he objected very little, if at all. He knew that we should wait some time before settling."

"And I think papa is as much for you as against you,

even now; but it's Mrs. Huntingdon who has made such a disturbance. She has never ceased since her return from Mentone to meddle with me and you; and she has succeeded in getting papa into the same frame of mind as herself. Then, very shortly there will be a wedding among us, and the idea of marrying his daughters 'well,' as inculcated by Alice, is very alluring to papa. That is how it has all happened. I don't think that papa wishes to withdraw his word as given to you, but he would be very glad if circumstances arose to part us."

"I hope no circumstances will arise calculated to lead to so undesirable an end. And, I can assure you, darling, that I have no intention of resigning you, as long as you will permit me to cling to you—not even to please an ambitious sister. If, on the contrary, you yourself seek to be released, why, then I would not dishonourably hold you bound."

"I shall not seek that, Edward," said Ada, looking most demurely at her fancy-work.

"My chief object in going to Cambridge—next to my life-work—is to secure such a position in life as shall make me more fitted to become your husband, Ada. I think I can understand something of the old spirit which animated those true knights, who brought all the honours and the trophies of the battle, the joust and the tournament, to deposit them with chivalric deference at the feet of their 'fayre ladies.' But as soon as I can, I must see your papa. No one yet knows of my coming; I told the man who admitted me that he need not announce me to anybody, as I wished to take you by surprise. I must set matters straight with Mr. Lee before the day is over, so that your life shall be pleasanter and easier."

And true to his word, Edward Telford sought Mr. Lee at the first available opportunity. The old gentleman was

more than surprised at his appearance, and on such an errand too; but he received the young man with all his wonted courtesy. After hearing what he had to say, Mr. Lee replied, "Yes, yes, I know I did give a sort of consent, but the thing seems to be most distasteful to the other members of the family. It seems a pity that two young persons, so impressible as you were, should have been thrown together for so long. I suppose nothing else could have been expected but what *did* come of it."

"May I ask you one question, sir? Do you think that I seek your daughter, or your money?"

"I will not do you the injustice, Mr. Telford, of thinking that you seek Ada's fortune. No; I hold you far superior to that sort of thing. You are no mere adventurer. But, you see, a great uncertainty rests on your present career. You have not yet completed your college course as divinity student; then you purpose spending three years more at Cambridge, and after that you may be some time before finally getting settled in a charge. On principle I object to long engagements; to you, personally, I have no objection. There, now you have the whole *rationale* of the matter. I don't think you mercenary by any means, but possibly the match might not be good for Ada."

"Thanks for this candid expression of your views. Since you agree with me in looking at money matters only as a secondary matter, let me promise you, Mr. Lee, that Ada's position shall not be inferior to any of her sisters. She is not willing to resign me, nor am I her. A long engagement must ensue, but it may perhaps be disciplinary, even beneficial to both of us. Only say you will not forbid it, Mr. Lee. Let me beg this of you."

"Well, since matters stand thus between you, I suppose I must," said the old gentleman. "But in order to do so

I must decide that the subject shall not be any further discussed. Alice means it well, but perhaps she is mistaken."

"Thank you," returned Edward. "For Ada's sake it would be most desirable. For her sake also, let me request that a little toleration be shown for me in my absence."

"We will shake hands on it, Mr. Telford," said Mr. Lee, as he extended his. "The thing shall be considered settled once for all. And since you have fought so nobly for her, I will wish you joy of your success."

CHAPTER XXIX.

AMERICAN EXPERIENCES.

As Ormond anticipated, commerce was at a stand-still in New York. The blockade of the Southern ports had reduced all trading to the smallest possible limits, and immense premises were lying unused and silent, destitute of all Southern produce, while the employés were off to the war. Fathers had given their sons, wives their husbands, and sisters their only brothers, to engage in the struggle between freedom and slavery. No business could be done, so Ormond took the best course possible, which was to lock up the premises belonging to his father, and after appointing a trustworthy old couple to reside there, as custodians of the place, he began to make his way about New York. Among the first whom he encountered was Ernest Osborne, but even he wore the military cap and dark blue tunic of the Northern army.

"How now, Ernest?" said Ormond, after brief congratulations and inquiries. "Are you engaged in the army?"

"Not exactly, and yet I am," was Ernest's reply. "Our society has taken upon itself the duty of sending out three or four men, fully equipped, to aid the Commission of the Sick and Wounded, and I have volunteered to go among them. If all be well, I shall be on the field of battle before this time next week."

"Indeed! Well I must say that yours is the nobler mission. Is the work much supported by the people generally?"

"I believe so, sir, for the enthusiasm created by the war is surprising. Our people believe that they *will* conquer; they have the cause of right and the God of right on their side. On that account, we don't want for men: and as for stores, please look inside for one minute, and the sight will give you some faint idea of what American people can do when they are deeply moved."

Ormond followed his old scholar, who was now quite a tiring, business-like young man, into the large warehouse, which had been, generally speaking, packed with books, reams of printing-paper, tons of tracts, piles of letterpress, and all the usual paraphernalia of a large publishing and tract society; but now all this had been summarily thrust aside, at the call of humanity, to make room for stores for the sick and wounded. There were blankets from Utica, rugs from Boston, lint from Albany, tea and sugar from Portland, brandy and medicines from Philadelphia, warm socks from Hudson, Bibles from Providence, and quilts of every size and sort, from a single patchwork coverlet up to the far-famed "Scripture quilt," which bore on it promises and passages of Scripture, worked in different coloured worsteds, in order to comfort the eyes of the dying. Beside these, tobacco, snuff, pipes, jelly, preserved meat, and other creature comforts, occupied no mean place among the pro-

visions for those brave fellows who were left *hors de combat* on the various battle-fields. With these, were tents and movable hospitals, designed to follow the progress of the army. It seemed that brotherhood and humanity had not died out by any means from the face of the earth, as one contemplated these stores, seeing that the mite of the widow, the cent of the child, the dollar of the mechanic, and the thousands of dollars of the rich man, had all aided in the work. Now, all that was needed was a band of earnest, well-qualified toilers, who should go forth, not counting their lives dear unto them, to assuage the miseries which necessarily follow on war, and to proclaim the gospel of salvation to sin-stricken and death-stricken men. Ernest Osborne was something more than a man of business: he was a good warehouseman, but he was a better Christian, and at the trumpet call of duty he rose to go forth among those whose mission was to save instead of to destroy.

"There! Our business has gone to the four winds, nearly, since this war set in; but the managers don't care about that, so that our good cause triumphs. And our best warehouse, you see, is given up for the service of the Commission. We are all of one mind here. And when I told my parents, the other evening, that I intended going out, they wished me 'God-speed.'"

The sight touched Ormond Lee's nature on its tenderest side. His sympathies were always strong on behalf of sick or suffering humanity, and the sight before him roused him too. He reasoned with himself silently for a few moments; here he should be in New York, idly lounging about, for many weary months, unable either to benefit himself or further the business. Would it not be as well to try and do some good, as he "found opportunity?" Turning to Ernest, he said, "Is your working staff quite full?"

'No, sir, I believe not. May I ask why?'

'Because I think I could join you. Have you room for ? I should like to take up the work while I remain idle. I can do nothing to business, possibly for months to come, but if you think I could be of service I should be pleased to join the Commission.'

Ernest Osborne's cheek flushed with pleasure as he heard this. It would indeed be a rich treat to have his old teacher as a fellow-worker. "They would be glad to have you, I know."

'Then I think I will go. Will you introduce me to your colleagues?'

'That I will, gladly,' said Ernest. "It will be like the old times; and an Englishman will meet with a special welcome in the work."

It was not long before preliminaries were settled, and Ernest accepted as a servant of the Commission. It was with new and strange emotions that he sought his couch that night, and contemplated the serious step which he had taken, while something of the responsibility which he had assumed began to press itself home upon him. Martial races and martial engagements had been strange things to him hitherto, but the prospect of being occupied on "the great plain" made him feel almost as if, in his voyage to America, his life had been shaped and moulded anew. He wondered what his friends would say; whether his sister would not deem the step another piece of "Ormond's Quixotic nonsense." And while thinking thus, it struck him that it would be best to write home, detailing the matter, in case that accident or pressure of duty might prevent his doing so after joining the camp. It was somewhat difficult to write such a letter, for he had to justify his conduct to those who could little appreciate it.

"Don't blame me, father," he wrote, "for the step I have taken. I could do no business in New York, for manufacture and commerce were at a stand-still. All our clerks had fled at the bugle's call to arms, and I entered upon deserted warehouses. My first step after ascertaining the impossibility of doing any business, and locking up all unsold stores, was to place the premises under the care of a trustworthy old couple, who were highly recommended to me by a friend. My next step was to seek out old acquaintances, and in so doing I found an outlet for my energies, instead of otherwise idly standing about. The Commission to the sick and wounded is busily engaged in sending out men and stores, to succour those who have suffered in the terrible engagements which have recently taken place, or the not less terrible marches which the men have made. The opportunity of engaging in the work was offered to me, and I at once embraced it. To-morrow I shall start with a number of other agents, and then I expect our opportunities of writing letters will be few and far between, so I have embraced this chance. When next you hear of me, I shall be busy at work in a new sphere of labour.

"I hope you will not be very angry with me, but at the same time I have acted according to my conscience. I suppose Alice will call me 'quixotic' and 'dreamy,' and all the rest of it. Let me tell her, however, that the work I have undertaken is neither quixotic nor dreamy, but hard, stern reality. Tell her it is no trifle to follow the march of battle, and to watch your opportunity of conveying away the wounded from under the dropping hail of bullets, and then to succour and soothe the sufferers. I know Ada will have a word of good cheer for me; she mostly sees eye to eye on any question with me, and she never laughs at my convictions of duty. Perhaps God has a work for me to do in

in the midst of this great struggle. I believe so, and if it be so I shall be safely carried through it, and spared to come back again to secular avocations. Until the war is over I can do no business for you here; until then, I must do higher work; and when the opportunity arrives, I shall, if God will, return to look after your interests.

"This war spirit absorbs everything else. You know how energetic and enthusiastic Americans can be when they like, and they have thrown all this feeling into the Abolition question. A certain party will have it that secession is the cause of war, but by far the greater majority of the people understand, and signify very plainly, that slavery is the real question at stake. The Southerners are determined to retain the right of trading in human flesh, while the Northerners are determined to banish the stigma from the land. There is a poor prospect for our cotton-spinners during the coming two or three years; but Americans hope and believe that Englishmen will stand by quietly, and let them have it out. King Cotton must abdicate for a while in favour of Freedom."

This news fell on the Lee family with something of the effect of a thunderbolt. Old Mr. Lee was very fond of his son, and indeed, in more or less degree, he was dear to them all. And now, added to the trial of being at a distance from them all, was the anxiety of knowing that he was in the midst of danger. A stray shot, a chance bullet, might any day put an end to the life that was so dear to them all. Had it been possible, they would have written back a letter, beseeching him to reconsider, or to withdraw from the step; but that could not be. Before such a letter could reach him he would be at the seat of war, filling what he deemed to be the post of duty.

CHAPTER XXX.

CAMP LIFE.

"Our bugles sang truce; for the night-cloud had lowered,
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpowered,
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die."
CAMPBELL.

As Ormond had said, within a week he was on the trail of the war, with Ernest Osborne and two other devoted men as his companions in toil and danger.

It was the eve of a great battle, and the two hosts lay encamped within hailing distance of each other. Many of the soldiers were busily engaged in some one of the multifarious duties of camp life, but many others were writing letters home, which in some instances were to be the last the poor fellows would ever send. Others were giving commissions to their comrades in case they fell on the morrow; and not a few were conning the pages of the little Testaments which formed part of the kit of every soldier. There is a solemnizing influence in the remembrance that death may be only a few hours from you; and the soldiers of the Northern army were for the greater part governed that night by this solemnity. Beside the challenges of the sentries posted at different points, one could hear every now and again the strains of some home song, sung perhaps in happier times, when mother, sire, and little ones were all gathered by the family hearth, and as the singer proceeded it was easy to discover how he too was affected by the remembrance. Ormond and his companions shared a tent belonging to a Massachusetts regiment, their messmates being one officer

and six men of this corps. Their stores of medicines, stimulants, arrow-root, and lint, were all at hand in the hospital wagon; and, judging from appearances, it seemed more than probable that before the setting of to-morrow's sun they would be all needed. The troops were under orders to be stirring by break of day in readiness for action.

The break of day came with the slant rays of a glorious summer sun, and the birds woke up and began to twitter forth their joyfulness in a hundred different notes. And before even these songsters awoke, there was life and activity at headquarters. Little rest had fallen to the share of the commander of that mighty host. Reverses had followed the Northern armies for some time, and it needed that a well-planned blow should be dealt that day, in order to revive the sinking hearts of the people. Precisely at the time appointed, the bugle sounded, and the right wing of the army led off the attack. Soon all were engaged, and under an almost deadly fire, Ormond and Ernest were busily employed in removing the wounded.

"This is warm work," said Ernest, as he paused a moment to refill his flask with spirits.

"It is, indeed," replied Ormond, and while he spoke, a shell ploughed up the earth near them. "Look," he continued, "the troops have moved off from that part of the field! Suppose we make our way there, and see to those who have fallen."

With the word they were off; and soon came to the portion of the battle-ground which was then covered with dead and wounded. It was not possible to see far, for the smoke of battle hung about like a thick pall, obscuring the horizon and making everything indistinct. But there was quite enough for the eye to rest on in the small space of land which lay immediately around them. Corpses, still

warm and trembling, broken bayonets, rifles, knapsacks, accoutrements, and wounded, dying men, lay scattered around in wild confusion, and among these it was their province to labour. It was no light thing to go among such, with their lives in the balance, giving the "cup of cold water" in the name of Christ, and so succouring weak and wounded humanity. Meanwhile the deafening roar of artillery went on without intermission.

"Help! help, there!" The cry came from a young lad who lay helplessly on his back, with both legs wounded. As Ormond went up to him he was startled to find that he was one of those with whom he had shared the tent during the preceding night. "Help me, comrades, if you can, but I fear I am done for. A drink of water first, if you please." Ernest held the can to his mouth, but as he drank the wounds burst out afresh, and he was laid back again on the grass.

"Don't leave me, sir," he said to Ormond, who placed his head gently on a folded greatcoat. "Don't leave me, I pray you, for the love of God. I know I shall not live very long, and human companionship is good."

"I will not," returned Ormond; "but can I not do something for you? Let me run to find a surgeon. I saw one pass just now."

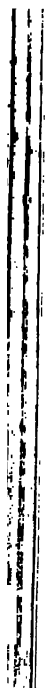
"And perhaps you may be shot down as you go," returned the wounded man. "No, no; I'm a doctor myself, and I know from my own experience that there is no hope."

"But you cannot help yourself now, whatever medical knowledge you possess. I *will* find a doctor, God helping me, and if he give you up, then I will tell you of the living Physician."

"Ay, do; I am bound for death; I think only Jesus can help me now."



OSBORNE'S MISSION OF MERCY



And while he spoke the cold perspiration was starting out, and a deathly pallor rested on cheek and brow. There was no time to parley, for with every spurt of blood from the wounded limbs the life was ebbing away. Ormond thought he descried a surgeon at some distance, and hastened forward. The man proved to be one, and within five minutes the two were back to the place where the wounded man lay.

It was but the work of a few minutes to examine his wounds. If anything, the poor fellow was weaker than when Ormond left him.

"What is your opinion of him? Do you think he could bear removal?"

"No; or stay, I will do my best to stop this bleeding, and then see if we can do something," said the surgeon. Improvising a tourniquet, he stayed the bleeding from the wounded limbs, and assisted Ormond to lift him on to a stretcher: then very gently they conveyed him to a hospital tent, and laid him on a mattress. By this time he had fainted from loss of blood, and the application of powerful stimulants was necessary to bring him round again. As he opened his eyes he thanked Ormond for the kindness shown him, and inquired if the medical attendant had any hope of him.

"Very little," said the surgeon. "None without amputation. Do you think you can bear that?"

"I am sure I cannot, and if my professional knowledge serves me aright the femoral artery is divided."

"You are right. It is."

"Then I'm a doomed man. Please bind it up as long as you can, for I have to send some messages to my home. Mr. Lee will remain by me to the end."

It was done, and then the surgeon had to depart in quest

of other sufferers. Ernest Osborne was gone too, for the battle raged fast and furious, and on every hand the dead and the dying were to be found. But before the surgeon went, he privately warned Mr. Lee that his services would not be wanted for long.

"What did Graham say to you, Mr. Lee?" said the wounded man, as Ormond helped him to some arrow-root. "Didn't he say that my time would be short?"

"He said something like that," returned Ormond, "but your own professional knowledge will warn you of the danger. Have I not heard you say that you studied for the medical profession?"

"Yes; I was a medical student, first at Harvard and then in New York. I am not yet twenty, and have not completed my studies, so that I have not taken my diploma. But the worst thing is that I am the only son of my mother, and she is a widow." Here his voice trembled and his eyes filled with tears. "If I could only see her I would not mind. She felt it so much to give me up, to fight in the cause of freedom; and prophesied that I should never return to her alive. I know she will pray for me—is praying for me now. It is good to have a praying mother, isn't it?"

"It is," said Ormond, as he kept his hands tightly on the bandages. The hospital surgeon had warned him that if they once gave way, the poor boy's life would ebb away a few minutes.

"Yes, it is good. Many times when I've been tempted by my soldier friends to break loose and 'enjoy myself,' they called it, I've been held back by the thought of my mother's prayers. When I was a little chap—so high—she would have me read the Bible to her at night before I went to bed, and I've never forgotten it. Let me see—you remember the poor thief's prayer, don't you?—'Lord, I

ember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.' I will say that now. And you pray for me too. Please hold me tight till I can see Jesus. Once you let go I shall die."

Still holding firmly by the bandage, Ormond knelt down, and first having read the portion about the dying thief, and the fifty-first psalm, committed the dying man to the love and pity of the Redeemer. He prayed as he never had before,—one prays in the presence of death more earnestly than at any other time. After offering a few wrestling, earnest petitions, in which he was joined by the young man, he rose.

"Now I should like you to read me some of the promises. I have committed my soul to Christ in faith and prayer, and I want to hear his voice."

Ormond did so, resting the Bible on the mattress, and holding the passages out with his disengaged hand. As verse after verse fell upon the poor fellow's listening ears his hope and trust were strengthened, and he could believe in him who has said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

For about half an hour he was quiet, and then he spoke again.

"Now I can trust. Jesus Christ was no stranger to me before. He has been my mother's Saviour for as long as I can remember, and she has carried me to him in her prayers, thousands of times. Lately, too, I have prayed for myself, because I knew that I was living under the shadow of death, and for some time past heaven and eternal things have seemed very near to me. I have desired to be ready in case the sudden summons should come; and now I believe Christ has made me ready." Then he paused again.

"Will you unbutton my shirt, and find a locket, which is fastened round my neck?"

Ormond did so.

"It contains the portraits of my mother and Lizzie. Lizzie was to have been my wife. Now take my pocket-book out of my pocket, and then you will find both addresses. They live away up in Massachusetts. After I am gone I want you to send them those things, and tell them about my death. Tell Lizzie to be a daughter to my mother. Now, Earth, good-bye.

With that he turned away his worn, but boyish face, and as long as he could listen, lay quietly, hearing Ormond repeat various portions of Holy Writ. But soon, as the surgeon had said, the bleeding burst out again, and the folds of the bandage were saturated with fresh blood. As the hæmorrhage went on his face grew paler and paler, and his features more refined, until the unmistakable image of death lay upon them. Very quietly he passed away, Ormond scarcely knew when or how, and the soul of the Massachusetts lad was with his mother's God.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A NEGRO ASSEMBLY.

It was a beautiful night. The moon with almost tropical splendour was shedding its silver rays on a forest scene. The long glades and leafy avenues were in shade, but the overhanging branches and the towering foliage were resplendent with beauty, while the soft green sward and the breath of the dying night wind combined to tranquillize the

t, and to remind man that He who "dwelleth not in
les made with hands," had his habitation even *there*.
solemn and harmonious grandeur of the night, and the
exuberance of the creations of his hand, seemed to say
the place was another "Bethel."

st how many times had the cry of some captured
ive slave rung through the forest-glades? How many
s had the thick woods and the dismal swamp re-
ed the moanings of the despairing runaway?—perhaps
ting and bleeding from cruel wounds, and seeking that
ty which is the birthright of all; how often had the
ss and the thicket furnished, instead of a sanctuary,
a grave to the oppressed one?

it now the woods re-echoed very different sounds. The
ng of a hymn sounded with almost electric effect in the
night. Around one of the largest trees, and surrounded
natural arbour formed by the wild vine and creeping
riar, were clustered a number of blacks wearing the
rm of the Northern army. It was not long after the
ng of the important decree by the far-seeing Lincoln,
the blacks should be enlisted and formed into coloured
ments, as the tide of warfare advanced into the South,
to assist in fighting for the liberty that was soon to be
s. From that time the strife assumed a bitterer aspect.
hners fought all the more determinedly, now that the
of their country was about to be wiped from the
nal escutcheon; and Southerners with more intensity,
ring that, whatever the struggle meant before, they
now fighting on behalf of the very existence of the
liar institution." "Good Massa Lincoln's" name was
heard in the prayer-meetings of the negroes; and by
ide of the martial camp it was not uncommon to hear
voices of these freed soldiers earnestly beseeching a

blessing upon the good cause of liberty. It was upon such a gathering as this that Ormond and Ernest had accidentally stumbled as they were returning to the hospital tent. Pausing a moment quietly they heard one of the men leading the devotions of the others in most impassioned strains.

The one who offered the prayer was an old gray-headed negro who seemed to have some sort of command among his fellows. "Uncle Jack," as he was called, was a prayer-leader, exhorter, and preacher, on the plantation to which he formerly belonged, and as such, was held in great respect. When the tide of war rolled over the estate to which he and his fellows were attached, and the presidential proclamation offered them the chance of entering the army, Uncle Jack was unanimously looked up to as a leader and commander among his friends. With him they would dare anything. Hence, as usual, he led the devotions of the company.

As he finished another aged negro arose and essayed to speak. On permission being accorded him, he said, "My friends and fellow soldiers! Just so sure as I'se a standin' on dese feet I know that we shall conquer. And though I'm all alone, I welcomes it for your sakes. If it had come thirty or forty years ago it would ha' been better for me, but de good Lord knows best. You mind my wife—my Pollie—don't you?" Nods of assent went round the older portion of the audience. "And you mind my little chil'en, too?" Nods of assent again. "Well, dey has all been taken away from me, an' I'se only am left. Pollie was flogged so cruelly one day when she took our boy's part, 'cause the overseer kicked him like a dog, that she just broke her heart an' died. I thought for sartin I'd broke mine too, for I'd no other friend on earth. My friends, it was only the thought of the little chile in my arms an' his

ung brothers that I didn't commit murder. But I wanted escape out of slavery with dem.

'Well then, you 'member how I tried to escape with the ee chil'en; an' how I camped in de swamps for three weeks, they fetched me out with de dogs. I wanted liberty for my 'en, but dey wouldn't let me have it, 'cause we belonged le old massa. I b'lieved dat we ought not to ha' been slaves—de same as I b'lieve it now, an' so den I tried to free. I didn't want to see my boys whipped within an of their lives for a saucy word to de overseer; but it all no good. Try how I would, I couldn't get away. dey sold my boys from me, down further South, as soon ley could do anything, an' I was left lonely. An' I'se lonely ever since. I'se never heard one word of dem, ther they be alive or dead; but I hope to see them by-by above de stars. Praps dey be slaves somewhar or er down here—praps dey be dead—de good Lord alone ws! Anyhow the Lord has come in bloodshed an' war, reach liberty to de captives, an' Massa Lincoln is his ant. Bress de Lord for Massa Lincoln; he be some-g like de Moses of old, when he went for to lead de elites out of de bondage of Egypt. Tell ye what, lren, if it hadn't been for de hope of better days dere"—and he pointed to the sky—"many's de time ; we should have committed murder. But bress de d, dere is a heaven wherein dwelleth righteousness."

How you know that, Pete?" said one of the younger of the party. "Seems to me as if God had forgotten se parts, quite."

Boy, don't you go thinking dat nonsense. I tell you, I sure of de heaven above, because something here"—and struck his broad chest—"tells me dat dere is a heaven. an' I *hanker* arter it. I'se hopin' to get dere soon, an'

though I may live to see freedom proclaimed for the slave, yet dat will be nuthin to the heavenly freedom up dere. An' de best of it is dat 'twill be always the same.

“ ‘When we’ve been dere ten thousand years,
Bright shining like de sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise,
Than when we first begun.’ ”

“I’s hoping dat Massa Lincoln an’ his soldiers will give us freedom. It’ll be all de better for you young ones who has to live in de world, but old niggers like me am too worn out to look forward much. Our partners are gone before us, our chil’en are slaves somewhar, we don’t know whar, and now dere is nothin’ left but God. God bress Massa Lincoln and de North! God give dem de victory.”

As the old man sat down amid the chorus of “Amens” and thanksgivings which followed his speech, he wiped the streaming tears from his eyes. Poor old man! The curse of slavery had entered into his soul. His family had all been torn from him—his feelings outraged, his rights trampled upon, and he himself made to drink the cup of thralldom to its bitterest dregs. It was no wonder that such as these should be almost too worn out to engage in active conflict, and yet hundreds of aged negroes accompanied the regiments for the purpose of sustaining and encouraging their relatives and friends. In a couple of minutes a third man was on his feet, striking up a well-known revival tune, promising to all who engaged in the conflict, “victory, and life, and peace,” secularizing these blessings for the time being, so as to make them apply to their special circumstances. It was a wild, noisy tune, full of vigour and life, but immensely popular among the negroes, who delight in this class of music. As Ormond and his

companion were listening to these proceedings with breathless interest, a soldier touched Ormond on the arm and said, "Are not you one of the Commission?"

"Yes, I am. Why?"

"Because we want your aid. A comrade of mine is dying in the hospital tent, and I have promised him that I will find a minister, if possible."

CHAPTER XXXII.

ANSWERING THE MUSTER-ROLL.

"Again the pale lips moved;
All else was still and motionless, for death
Already had his fatal work half done;
But gathering up his quickly failing strength
The dying soldier—dying victor, said,
'Hush! for the angels call the muster-roll!
I wait to hear my name!'

"And presently a smile
As of most thrilling and intense delight
Played for a moment on the soldier's face,
And with his one last breath he whispered,
'Here!'"

THIS way, please, and as quick as you can. My poor comrade was only brought in this morning from the spot where he has been lying ever since the battle. I think he could have been saved had he been found before."

And quickening their steps, away the two men started at rapid rate. Ernest Osborne remained behind to witness the conclusion of the prayer-meeting, in which he felt deeply interested. It was perhaps the first time that he had heard

the genuine African in religious exercises, but it was plain that in earnestness at all events he would bear comparison with the better trained and more highly developed white man. And in common with many other people, Englishmen as well as Americans, Ormond had previously conceived an almost nameless prejudice against negroes, which this night's experience had done much to mitigate. He began to perceive that they stood higher in the scale of humanity than he had given them credit for.

As Ormond and his guide traversed the distance between the forest and the camp the silvery moonlight revealed much of the horrors of war. Here and there were the remains of some farmstead, or some planter's mansion, reduced by fire and pillage to ruins. In some cases, however, they had been utilized for army purposes, or for hospital uses, wherever available. Cornfields, rice and maize patches, tobacco and cotton lots, and sugar-brakes were all trodden level with the ground by the progress of the army. The proprietors had fled, none knew whither, to mourn their lost property—both human and landed—and to meditate on futile schemes of reprisal. In some instances the huts of the slaves remained standing, and where possible they had been utilized for sentry-boxes, stores, or hospitals. It was to one of these huts, but one rather larger and more commodious than the others, because in former times the residence of the overseer, that the two bent their steps. On entering a sad sight met their eyes. Overhead, suspended from the roof by loops of twine, were two small oil lamps giving out a light wholly inadequate to the requirements of the place. Two knotted thongs were hanging up on large nails; they told their own story but too eloquently. Beside these were some heavy handcuffs used in the capture of runaway slaves. Two rows of mattresses were ranged along,

taking the entire length of the miserable place, and being spread on the floor, one could see at a glance the pain, the loneliness, and the sufferings which fell to the lot of the poor fellows. All were suffering, but some most bitterly, and their pain was aggravated by the remembrance of the dear ones at home. Some were lying with heads or faces bandaged up, others with limbs upon which the surgeon's operating knife had done its work, and others told very plainly by the hollow death-rattle that the end was almost come. Among the last was the soldier to whom Ormond was led by his guide. A bullet had swept its course through his chest and had injured his lungs, causing a fearful hæmorrhage. Possibly, during those long, lonely days, had medical aid been available, he might have lived, but in silent agony he had wasted his life's blood, and now his young ardent spirit was fast bound for the unseen world. A comrade who lay near him, disturbed the rest of some of the wounded men by his outcries and groans. Part of his face had been blown away, and his agony was fearful, but these things seemed to have no effect on the lying man. Occasionally he would look up and address some question or remark to the surgeon, but then again his thoughts would wander to far-off times, and he would recall busily the days of his boyhood. Bending down over him, Ormond asked:

"Comrade, what is your hope?"

No answer. The mind could scarcely be roused by a strange voice.

"Have you any hope in Christ? Do you know him?"

"Yes; oh yes."

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Ormond waited to see if these cheering words produced any corresponding effect on the young man. Pre-

sently, rousing himself, he looked up and said, "Yes; it has cleansed me! I learned that in the Sunday-school when I was a boy in Philadelphia, and I've never lost hold of it. And my father is now preaching that gospel in a village in New England. Promise me that you will go to him when the war is over and tell him how his boy died. You will find all my letters and papers in my knapsack. Promise me that you will go there!"

"Do you very much wish that I should?"

Ormond scarcely knew how to promise, yet he had less heart to refuse.

"I do. My father is old and white-haired. My little sister lives with him, but my mother is dead. They will watch and wait for my coming day after day. Will you tell him how I died, and say that I could trust in Jesus at the last?"

"I will do so. Rest assured of this, that if it be possible, and your father be living when the war is over, I will see him for you."

"Thank you. And tell Nellie to meet me. Nellie is a good little thing; she will miss me so much. Good-bye."

And he closed his eyes as if to compose himself to sleep, but it was vain, for the crimson blood came up in his throat again and half choked him. A paroxysm of coughing and bleeding followed, which sorely tried his remaining strength; and with each fresh gush of the hæmorrhage it was plain that the end was nearer. When the bleeding ceased, he closed his eyes and to all appearance fell asleep. But he was not asleep; it was semi-insensibility, and every now and then a muttered word would show that life still fluttered in his veins. All at once, however, he started up from his insensibility, and shouted as loudly as he could the single word "*Here!*"

"What is the matter?" said the surgeon. "Do you want anything?"

"No. Did you not hear my name called?"

The by-standers deemed him wandering. No one had so much as whispered his name.

"We heard nothing. You must have been dreaming."

"No, no; I was not dreaming. The angels were calling me muster-roll and I answered to my name. *It is there, comrades.* 'Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory.'"

Yes; in this martial figure he had the assurance that his name *was* written in the Lamb's book of life. He never spoke afterwards, but quietly and gently breathed out his life. Before morning dawned he had closed his eyes on all earthly objects.

Ormond could not stay till the end. His wearied frame sorely needed rest, and by about two o'clock he was thoroughly beaten out. After making sure that he was no longer wanted in the hospital-tent, he started for his own quarters. By this time the moon was gone down, and except the challenges of the sentries, silence and darkness reigned over all. Once or twice he stumbled over a prostrate soldier as he lay on the ground, overcome by fatigue, by illness, or drink. But his difficulties began really when he was outside the lines. As far as he could judge, his quarters lay to the south of the encampment, but how to turn, or which way to go, he knew not. Had the moon continued shining he could soon have recovered his bearing, but now, amid the gloom, all that he could distinguish, and that only very dimly, was the great pine forest, under whose branches he had been a silent listener to the negro service. The wind sighed up and down among those forest aisles, as if in harmony with the saddening scenes of bloodshed and

sorrow which were to be seen on every hand; and the croaking of the frogs, the chirp of the grasshopper, and the faint scream of the whip-poor-will, made up the nocturnal chorus. However, on he went, trusting in the Providence overhead to get safely to his tent, musing the while on the dying soldier, who perchance was even now in eternity. His last utterance, "Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory," was running through and through his brain as he plodded along, when all at once, just as he emerged from under a thick belt of pine, a short, sharp "Halt!" was called.

He stopped in a minute at peril of his life.

"Halt, there! Give the password!"

"Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory," Ormond said, and as he said it he started and recovered himself, remembering as he did so that the text was not the password, and that, worse than all, he was ignorant of it.

"Are you mad? I don't want a verse from the Bible."

"Pardon my absence of mind. I have been visiting a sick soldier, and unconsciously repeated his dying words before I was aware of it. I do not know the password. I forgot to ascertain it."

"Are you a friend?"

"I am, and in the Commission of the Sick and Wounded."

"How am I to know that? Do you know that I can either make you prisoner, or shoot you down if you offer to advance?"

"I do know it, but I assure you that it is not my fault. I am a friend; I am perilling my life on the side of the North, although an Englishman."

"That may be, but how am I to know it? You may be a Confederate spy for aught I know; and if I were to release you, the next sentry may shoot you down."

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE COUNTERSIGN.

"I tell you," urged Ormond, "that I am not a spy. I engaged on the side of the North; although an Englishman and a business man, I have laid by business for the moment, and am risking even my very life for your cause. Would you have me do or say more to prove my sincerity?" "Sir, personally I do not doubt your word, but by the nature of the service you must become my prisoner. I have no doubt that it is all right, but the morning must prove

You must for the present consider yourself my prisoner, and remain with me until I am relieved. Our orders are very strict, and spies are unfortunately very numerous."

"Very well, then, so be it;" and Ormond, seeing that no more could come of arguing, took up his position by the side of the thick stump which served for sentry-box.

"May I ask what is your name? To what corps do you belong?" said the sentinel. "You certainly have not the accent twang any more than myself. I am an Englishman." "Indeed! My name is Ormond Lee, but it is not likely you will know it; and, as I told you before, I belong to the service of the Sick and Wounded."

"Do you come from Liverpool?"

"Yes."

"You do!" and the hitherto grave, stern sentinel almost dropped his rifle in his excitement. "*You*, Ormond Lee! Yes, you don't know me, then! I'm your old scholar, I Blake!"

"You are! Is that possible?" It was now Ormond's turn to be surprised.

"Indeed I am, and no other. You remember our lit- home, don't you, and how my mother and grandfather would fain have kept me at home?"

"Of course I do, but you left England for Canada. *What* wind blew you into the States? I always knew you to be a boy fond of reading and talking about soldiers and battles; but for all that I should never have dreamed of seeing you here."

"Well, teacher—the old name comes out first still—if you will sit down alongside this old stump, I will tell you the whole matter; only I must just go to the other end of my beat first."

He did so, and for several minutes was beyond Ormond's view. The dim starlight only revealed his figure for a short distance, but his footfalls were very distinct in the still night air. As he came back he deposited his rifle very carefully within reach, and sat down by his old friend.

"There, we're pretty safe now, I suppose; but there is really no knowing what tricks those Confederate spies will be up to. Two sentinels have been shot dead at this very post this week already. It may possibly be our turn next; but if they come in sight they shall have the contents of my rifle in less than no time.

"Well, I needn't go back to my starting for Canada. You will remember that, I daresay. Mother took on a good deal I think at first, but lately she writes more cheerfully, and grandfather is enamoured now of the idea of coming out to me. If he comes, of course mother will, and then I will do my best at making a home for them. I have a tidy bit of money saved, which I placed in the bank before I came away down here, with full directions that in case of

ny death it may be forwarded to mother. It's a good bit, omething like a hundred and fifty dollars. If I get home rom the war, though, which I hope I shall, I mean to go to arming, for I know some capital little homesteads to be old cheap, and just the thing to suit a beginner. I am etting my pay accumulate for this purpose too, for you see f I had it I couldn't spend it in much that is any good now. but I was going to tell you how I came to join the Northern rmy.

"Well, you see, there was a young fellow in the shop here I worked, who was a Yankee. He had a wife and hree children away down in New York State, and upon ar being declared he went off to them at once. While at ome he was drawn in the conscription, and not knowing o whom to apply, he sent to me, begging me to take his lace in the army as substitute. The government, you see, llowed them to do that. I didn't much like the look of hings, for the Southerners meant ugly fighting, but it went gainst me to say no to the poor fellow's request. He had . wife and children to leave while I had nobody, and as e'd been very kind to me in my lonely days at the shop, I ouldn't refuse. But it was with a sore heart in one respect, or fear of any trouble I might bring on my mother: lthough, on the other hand, I was always longing after a oldier's life. I suppose it's in the blood, sir, but the rattle f the kettle-drum, and the music of the fifes, always makes ne long to go into action.

"So, as I told you, I took his place, and here I am. I shall never forget how his poor wife blessed me when I arrived from Canada to take her husband's place. It seemed as if she couldn't thank me enough, and when I saw the three dear little children clinging to them I felt more than repaid, for I remembered all the lonely days of my mother's

widowhood and my orphanage. Ah! sir, it's a sorry thing to leave little ones exposed to the mercies of a cruel world. I know all about that. But I must be off again: it's quite time that I paced my beat once or twice more, and then I expect to be relieved. When I go off duty I will take you to the commanding officer and explain the circumstances under which you are my prisoner."

Away Hugh paced again in his stalwart, determined fashion, leaving Ormond to his own meditations. By this time the gray light of a beautiful summer's dawn was breaking over the hills, dispelling the darkness and revealing the beauties of creation. A few birds twittered their morning song here and there among the branches overhead,—then more, and then within a short half hour a full chorus of feathered songsters filled all the forest with melody. The beams of the sun shone aslant through the branches, and as Ormond's eyes became used to the situation, he discovered that he had taken the turning to the north instead of to the south. A southerly direction would have carried him straight to the Commission tent, whereas now, had he not been stopped by Hugh, he would inevitably have gone on until he had fallen into the hands of the Confederates, so that unquestionably Hugh Blake had been Ormond's good providence that night.

As soon as he was relieved, Hugh marched off with Ormond to the tent of his commanding officer. A few brief words of explanation was all that was required, for Ormond Lee's face was already known among many of the men, who respected him for his unwearied attention to and skilful treatment of the sick. And his ministrations were valued the more because of his ability to speak words of comfort to the wounded soul. When the sands of life are fast running out, and the soul feels that its props and stays are all giving way,

one by one, before the dread reality, Death, the dying one needs more comfort than can be found in any hospital appliances or surgical skill. When bound for Eternity—when cut adrift from all earthly refuges—one needs the Rock of Ages to cling to, and to this Rock, Ormond faithfully pointed the dying. He was believed to be a chaplain as much as anything else, and it was no uncommon thing for him to officiate at the burial service.

A thought struck him, however, before parting with his old scholar, who was now about to return to his own particular duties.

“Hugh, excuse my asking this one question of you before we part. You know we may never meet again; an engagement may suddenly be the means of terminating your existence, or mine. Now, in the event of being cut off thus, what is your hope?”

“Teacher”—and the young man’s voice faltered, as he spoke solemnly—“do you remember a text which you taught me many years since at the Sunday-school: ‘Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ?’ That text gave me peace some months since, after an anxious, tearful seeking for mercy, and upon the strength of that I came here cheerfully in the stead of my shopmate. Should a ball carry me off, I hope I shall die resting upon that blessed word.”

“Thank God!” said Ormond, as he wrung the young man’s hand with new affection. “Thank God I did not labour entirely in vain. May God keep and preserve you, even amid the storm of Southern bullets!”

It was time for Ormond to return to his own quarters. An hour’s rapid walking brought him there, to Ernest Osborne’s great relief. Not being able to hear anything of his friend’s whereabouts since being last together at the

negro prayer-meeting, he was beginning to get greatly alarmed, fearing that some misfortune had happened to him. He had just made up his mind to report his absence to his chief, and request the favour of a search party, when who should walk in but the missing one himself.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LETTERS FROM HOME

"I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
That my soul cannot resist.
A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles rain."—LONGFELLOW.

GENERAL SHERMAN was resting, only in order to gather up fresh strength. Success had followed his arms, and if now the fickle goddess Fortune would only continue to smile upon his tactics, the duration of the war would be greatly shortened. Meanwhile, officers and men were busily engaged in camp duties, tending the sick, keeping sentry, reconnoitring, and at times sending home such correspondence as their limited opportunities and conveniences afforded. Ormond had not heard from home for many long weary weeks—and very anxious weeks they had been to him. On account of the desultory movements of the army his correspondence had reached no further than New York, for had he named a country post-office, it would have been quite uncertain whether or no he would ever have seen them at

all. But since the general had made known his intention of remaining in his present quarters until reinforced with fresh supplies, Ormond had telegraphed to the postmaster at New York, directing him to forward all letters and papers then lying there for him to the Creektown post-office. Creektown was a large village on the borders of the forest, but it boasted the usual Yankee accompaniments of a court-house, store, and post-office. The people were disparagingly spoken of as surly, unaccommodating, and exacting: perhaps, however, the vicinity of the army made them worse, seeing that in war time most people have to take a very decided stand for themselves and their personal belongings. However, whatever the place itself or its inhabitants might prove, Ormond cared very little, provided that they carefully secured, and as duly handed over to him, his letters. So, having procured the loan of a horse, he rode over one gloomy, wintry afternoon to the office, leaving Ernest Osborne to act as his substitute for the time.

The scene and season were alike gloomy, but Ormond's heart was gloomier still. There are times in the history of all who think deeply, and strive to act up to their ideal of the higher life, when everything seems to mock, depress, and discourage. Anxiety and depression brood over the spirit like a nightmare, and the reaction which always sets in at some time or another, after great and sustained self-sacrifice, comes over the heart with overwhelming power. At such times one wonders if one is right; if the faith which has nerved to suffering and duty is real after all; if the goal which has been so long sought is only a myth, and if the cold, calculating spirit of worldly people be not the most profitable. Heaven seems to grow far distant to the spirit's eye, and earth is temptingly grand and near. All martyrs, all confessors, all reformers, all missionaries, all heroes, have

had these experiences at some time or another. When borne on in their work upon the flow-tide of faith and prayer, it seemed as if mountains were nought, and difficulties only made to be surmounted. But the body must have sway too;—weariness, hunger, loneliness, over-exertion, and unkind treatment, with, it may be, active opposition, chill the heart, and paralyse the energies. It is then ebb-tide with the soul, and while still clinging to faith and hope, one feels as if one would fain “look back” from the chosen work, now and for ever.

It was such a season as this with Ormond Lee. His long absence from home, trials, hardships, and loneliness had led him almost to doubt whether he was in the path of duty. And although God had made him the honoured instrument of pointing many dying soldiers to the Cross, and of comforting the last hours of many more, his spirit sunk within him as he contemplated the struggle which had yet to be undergone before he would be free to return to New York. His soul was sick of bloodshed, and he longed for more congenial society. He was hoping just now that he would find some letters from home at the office, for he longed for tidings of the far-away dear ones, as the thirsty wayfarer longs for water in the desert. Would he get them? If so, his heart would be cheered and his soul strengthened.

“Any letters for me?” he asked, of a tall, brawny-looking fellow, whom he supposed to be the postmaster. This man was in shirt-sleeves, sitting on a barrel, smoking, for in conjunction with his calling as postmaster, he also followed that of store-keeper.

“Wal, stranger, that depends on what yer name is,” replied the man, shifting his quarters a few inches, and knocking out his pipe, preparatory to refilling it. “That depends on what yer name happens to be.”

"Well, my name is Ormond Lee, and I expect some
s from England. They ought to be here by this
"

Val, it jest occurs to me that we have some letters here
name like that. Wait a minute, stranger, and I'll

But you see the war has made a dreadful muss with
thing. Things ain't a bit ship-shape, nor yet likely
to my mind. Sherman must whip the rebels a bit more
e they'll leave the mail-bags alone.

Do you often get the mail-bags tampered with?"

Val, five times out of every six. 'Twas only the other
that they shot a poor fellow down, because, ye see, he
ln't stand and deliver, as soon as they ordered him. He
of course, that they would only play the monkey with
ags, and rip them all up for the sake of the money and
ews they could get, so he refused, and very properly
stranger. Guess that is the spirit you Britishers
re?"

Yes, of course we always admire bravery, wherever we
. But I'm anxious for my letters. You are not look-
or them, are you? and I'm in a hurry."

Val, now! Guess you be one o' them army chaps as
after the sick and wounded. Some Commission or
er, ain't it?" And the dilatory Yankee knowingly
yed the badge on Ormond's cap.

Yes; 'Sanatory Commission,' or 'Commission of the
and Wounded,'—whichever you like to call it. And
cannot be absent from my post long, I'd like to finish
usiness here."

Oh, wal, stranger, ye needn't be in such a hurry.
gs go on quite as well without it. Guess the war
be over in a hurry,—wish it would be, though."

And he handed over to Ormond some half-a-dozen letters

and papers which had been sent to New York at different times.

"Thank you, thank you!" said Ormond, as he took them out of the old gossip's hand, and without stopping to hear more, was off again to enjoy as quickly as possible the news of the dear old home. He could fain have tied his horse to the nearest tree, and sitting quietly down, go through them at once, but it would have been highly dangerous to do so. So spurring on his horse, he started off at a rapid gallop, and soon arrived at his tent. Once in, Ernest Osborne took charge of his steed, and sitting down on his rug he was soon lost to all else in the perusal of letters from the mother-country.

The first he opened bore the familiar handwriting of his sister Ada. It was full of intelligence of one and another of the family. It told him that his little nephew, Frank Huntingdon, was no better, and that, judging from the reports of the medical men, it seemed unlikely that he ever would recover. This was a sad announcement to Ormond. As he replaced the letter in the envelope he wondered if he should be spared to see the child again.

The next was from Edward Telford, and told of his career mostly. Edward was at Cambridge now, studying hard. He was prospering in every sense of the word, and full of high hope and eager anticipations of the future. Ormond could not help musing on the different ways by which he and Edward—the teacher and the taught—were then being led. One was walking the rough and self-denying path of active service—the other pursuing the even tenor of his way, quaffing deep draughts from the fountain of learning. To one had fallen, all unexpectedly, the "pleasant places" of life—to the other the strife and the unrest of warfare. 'Tis even so.

"For God through ways they have not known,
Will lead his own."

next was from Harry Gilfillan. Our readers will not forgotten that he was, when last we heard of him, in a, being fitted for the work of schoolmaster. Since ad's departure for America he had left college, and ed an appointment to a school in a provincial town, but we will tell the story in his own words.

Then I look back, and review the past, I think I can be sufficiently thankful for the kindness and discretion which you dealt with me during my wilful and volatile od. I could never appreciate you then one-tenth part ch as I do now, for the simple reason that the boy ; judge how much he is indebted to the influences it to bear upon his youth: he must grow to manhood he is able to do this, even in part. Every day it upon me more and more that your patience, your erance, your 'aptness to teach,' your tact with me, as al, mischief-loving youth, and above all, your prayer- s, have made me in my turn what I am as an ctor of others. Of course I am only young, and can- pect to attain as yet the success in my work which ttained. But I am trying to walk in your steps, ; by-and-by to win your reward also.

y school is a large one, in a manufacturing locality. ads are quick, bright, and fond of learning, but as evous and trying as they can well be. Pertness seems a second nature to them; and sometimes, as you may e, I am tried beyond measure. But when tempted lay passion before the lads, I just remember how *my ichter* dealt with me, and try the same methods, which more efficacious than the rod.

“Beside my week-day work, I have a Bible class on the Sabbath, in which I do my best to instruct some twenty or thirty young men, most of whom are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. When asked to assume this onerous duty I declined again and again, not feeling able to cope with the work involved. But again and again I was asked, and feeling that providence had surely marked out the work for me, I could not dare refuse any longer. And I hope, too, that I know experimentally something of the great truths which I teach. Did I not, I should be only as ‘sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.’ And when I come to a knotty point, or a queer question of Christian ethics or doctrine (and often the scholars like to put these), I can go back on the tide of recollection, recalling how in the past you dealt with me and my puzzling queries, and pointed me with unflagging kindness ‘to the law and the testimony.’ Dear sir, be encouraged wherever you are, for surely your labour with us then was ‘not in vain in the Lord.’”

CHAPTER XXXV.

FORESHADOWINGS.

"God forgive me, I seem to feel
A certain satisfaction steal
Into my heart and into my brain,
As if my talent had not lain
Wrapped up in a napkin, all in vain.
Take it, Lord, and let it be
As something I have done for thee."

"We must all die and not the old alone,
The young have no exception from that doom."

GILFILLAN'S letter was like "the rain upon the new grass." It would have been welcome at any time, and when almost sinking under the combined weight of the duty and unwonted depression, it came just at the moment to infuse fresh life into his soul. It was cheering, too, to know that the good which he had wished in time past among his lads had reproduced in Gilfillan's career. And the results of that one life would be beyond his computation, seeing that the power and influence of a teacher upon young minds is endless in its effects. Like the ripple which the least onlooker makes upon a mighty lake, and which end and extend until the farthest shore feels its tiny touch, the power of even one mind, for good or evil, will be extending and repeating itself till time shall be no more. There was much hope for Ormond in the fact that he was treading in his steps. There was yet another letter among the unopened ones which was of no common interest. As Ormond opened it he wondered curiously as to the writer, seeing

that the handwriting was new to him, but on looking down the page his face flushed with pleasant surprise. It was written in Frank Huntingdon's school-boy hand—for he was now a thoughtful, clear-headed little fellow of eleven or twelve, and this was the first letter he had ever written his uncle. Ormond had been away now two years and more—indeed, on the expiration of another three months he would have been absent from Liverpool three years, and no one in all the home-circle had missed him more, or longed for his return more constantly than Frank. You will remember that he was always a special favourite with Ormond, and the lessons of love and truth which the lad had learned from his uncle had not been lost. For a long time the seed had remained hidden by childish pleasures and pursuits, but now Frank was beginning to see in the quietude of his weakness and illness that "Uncle Ormond's teachings" were not "queer," but comforting in his hour of need. Of course his experience was that of a child; one cannot expect more than a childish faith from a child, or a boy's religion from a boy. Possibly this is where so many older Christians err—they expect too much from young disciples. But as Christ taught that before the ear, and "the full corn in the ear," there is merely the "*blade*," and that childhood precedes manhood in Christ Jesus, we had better follow the Master in this respect. May it not be that too many young aspirants to the heavenly life have been disheartened and frowned out of hope because of this conventional standard of religious experience? And if they err, woe be to them, for the Master's professed followers have too often forgotten his words respecting the erring ones. But we must make room for just one extract from Frank's letter, which, by the way, was rather voluminous:—

"I should like to see you so much, uncle, and to be with you;

but I am obliged to be a great deal at home, in my own room, now. I have given up all my studies; Dr. Sergeant said that I must not study any more. It seemed hard at first for me to do this, but I had to submit. I think I should have done it better, though, if you had been at home with me. I had all my school-books brought up into my own room and tied up in one large parcel; and all the while the lump in my throat *would* keep on swelling up, till it almost choked me. Then I begged the nurse to go downstairs and leave me. I didn't tell her why, or she wouldn't have gone; but I felt as if I must have a good cry, all to myself, over the disappointment of all my hopes. I have so wanted to become a learned man, and I have set my heart on it so long—almost ever since I can recollect—that the doctor little thought how hard the trial was to me. But then I remembered that you told me once that it was better to be good than learned; and that comforted me a little. Oh, uncle! I want to be good; something seems to tell me that I sha'n't live to be a man. Papa and mamma say that I shall, but I think not. Anyhow, I shouldn't mind if I were *good* like you. I was reading in the little pocket Bible which you gave me before you left us, that Jesus took little children up in his arms and blessed them. Now I think if I could *see* Jesus, it would be so much easier. I would go to him at once, wherever he was, and ask him to bless me; but I can't see him, and what you call *faith* puzzles me. I can't exactly understand it, but I have asked Jesus over and over again to make me his own child. Sometimes as I lie still in bed at night I look out of my window up to the stars, and think what it will be to be up above all with Jesus. I suppose he does not despise a boy's prayers like mine; certainly, if he loved the little children, he loves boys too, and so I am not afraid to tell him what I want. Is this

religion? Am I right or wrong, uncle? I hope it is not wrong, because I feel as if I must go on telling Jesus all that I feel and want; it is so sweet, and I love him so much. But still I want to know what religion is. Is it anything like this?"

"He hath hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes," was the half-spoken comment of Ormond, as he handed the letter to Ernest Osborne for his perusal. Ernest generally had the reading of all Ormond's home-letters, so strongly and thoroughly were they one in the bonds of friendship. But as Ormond rose from the perusal of the correspondence he felt another man. The gloom was gone, the bitterness assuaged, the weariness lightened, and the clouds chased away by the home-news which he heard. Truly these letters had been to him like "springs of water in a dry and thirsty land;" and now, whether the struggle should be long or short, he felt nerved with fresh strength, and able to go forward as long as the need should exist in the arduous path of duty he had chosen.

* * * * *

But we must not dwell on the varied incidents of the war; were we to do so our narrative would be far too long. Suffice it to say that day succeeded day, week succeeded week, and month succeeded month, during which the deadly strife went on, and on, right to the bitter end. At times it seemed as if the victory would be doubtful: first one and then the other side received repulses which cost the lives of brave men and the peace of thousands of homes. During the whole struggle Ormond, Ernest, and Hugh kept up, as far as their multifarious duties would admit, a close friendship. Of course this was more practicable in the case of Ormond and Ernest, than with Hugh

Blake, seeing that he had to be on daily duty with his own regiment, sometimes miles away. But many an hour the three spent in company, and many a time the silent woods re-echoed the prayers of these three English friends, so strangely thrown together in the strife and turmoil of civil war. And they deemed it not beneath their manhood to do this, for if ever men live in solemn times, it is when a shot or a bayonet may terminate their existence within an hour.

One evening the three friends met somewhat unexpectedly. Ormond and Ernest were returning from the hospital tent, and Hugh was marching in double-quick time in the contrary direction.

"Good evening, Hugh," said Ormond, who was the first to speak. "Whither are you bound so fast?"

"They tell me that another action is impending," replied Hugh, "and so I have been writing letters to one place and another in case I should fall. Here is one for mother, and one for my Canadian landlady, you see. I am going on sentry to-night, and I shall post them first."

"I heard to-day," remarked Ernest Osborne, "that the general contemplated an advance, but in what direction I cannot say."

"Neither can I," rejoined Hugh, "but my station to-night is upon the banks of the Wampiquinnock Ford, and, as far as we know, that post is near the left wing of the enemy. It is a dangerous post, too. Three sentries have been shot down in succession there."

"I hope you will be spared," said Ernest, as a look of apprehension passed over his face.

"Well, if I am not—it is the soldier's fate." But Hugh could not quite disguise his feelings; they could see, as he turned away, the big tears welling up in his eyes.

"Yes, we must take the chances of war," said Ormond, "but it is good to know that God is overhead, and that he cares for us. Not a sparrow falls to the ground but he knows it, and your chances of danger and death are all foreseen of him. The chief thing is to be prepared, and then, living or dying, we are the Lord's."

"Only, if anything *should* happen to me, remember, teacher, that I depend upon you to see to all my affairs, and to write the news to my mother. I know you would be the best to do this; and beside, you know more than anybody else about my affairs. Somehow I have a queer dread of going on sentry-duty to-night—a presentiment of evil. I couldn't be worse if I were about to stand in the forefront of the battle."

What a strange thing presentiment is, and yet who can define it? Is it that some mysterious messenger from the land of the shadow of death comes to us, and wafts over us some strange breath of that far-off country, making our minds leap out, in spite of ourselves, towards the goal of immortality. We cannot tell where or how the unseen and unknown state is linked to our own, but certain it is that while no mortal terrors can appal, the faintest whisper from within the veil can make our hearts grow sick, and even to stand still. Warnings and impulses as mysterious as the unseen state itself sometimes come to us from thence, and will be listened to, in spite of the stoicisms of boasted philosophy; and there are times when the most boastful unbeliever in spiritual things will bow beneath the sway of unseen influences and surroundings.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

KILLED AT THE FORD.

"Sudden and swift a whistling ball
Came out of a wood, and the voice was still.
Something I heard in the darkness fall,
And for a moment my blood grew chill:
I spake in a whisper as one who speaks
In a room where some one is lying dead,
But he made no answer to what I said.

"We lifted him up to his saddle again,
And through the mire, the mist, and the rain,
Carried him back to the silent camp,
And laid him as if asleep on his bed."

As Hugh Blake had said, the Wampiquinnock Ford was one of the most dangerous stations in the whole line of outposts. Three sentinels, one after another, had been shot down during as many nights, and as the sergeant left Hugh at his station and went on his rounds he bade him "keep his courage up, and remember the Providence overhead."

For an hour Hugh paced up and down, in solemn, stately regularity, listening to every sound which could possibly be distinguished in the still night, and wondering if any Confederate spy were seeking his life. For a long time the only sounds which he could make out, were the sighing of the night wind and the rustling of the branches, intermingled with the pleasant low gurgle of the water as it meandered along by the ford. Hugh's thoughts were very busy that night; they travelled hither and thither, between Canada, the States, and England, with lightning speed, and he wondered what his mother would think if she could see him keeping sentry now. Hush! what was that? A rustle, evidently. Hark! No sound followed, and Hugh continued

his steps, but presently, "click" went a rifle—a short, sharp report cleft the air, and Hugh lay stretched on the green-sward, with his life welling out in a crimson stream. The Confederate spy had done his work, and Hugh Blake was the fourth murdered sentry picked up at the Wampiquinnock Ford.

* * * * *

Early in the morning—for army life does not foster sloth—Ormond and his *confrère* were passing through the camp, intent on their duty, when they met a very gloomy cavalcade. Four soldiers bore a hastily-formed litter, on which lay the form of a young and stalwart soldier. Such sights were not uncommon, and at first the two friends were passing on without further notice, but Ormond happening to glance aside at the prostrate form, something in the contour of the face and the colour of the hair attracted his attention immediately. He went up to the men, and in a minute recognized his old scholar, Hugh Blake.

"Where did you find the body?" inquired Ormond, while a shade of horror-stricken sorrow passed over both his features, and those of Ernest Osborne.

"Over by the Wampiquinnock Ford," was the reply of the foremost soldier. "Guess you know him, don't you? was he one of your friends?"

"Yes, he is an Englishman, and was one of my schoolboys many years ago. We happened both to meet again while serving in this war."

"Oh, indeed! That ford is a very dangerous post. But it's one comfort to think that the spy got paid back. However, we have suffered terribly at their hands: this makes the fourth poor fellow shot down there like a dog since last week."

"So I understood before. Hugh himself told me last evening that three men had paid for keeping sentry at that post with their lives in as many nights, and I think half expected his own doom, but I could scarcely think it would come to this for him."

"No, it's hard to think it," returned the officer who was in charge of the party; "but there are ten chances to one against a man's life at these outposts." And the soldier reverently covered over Hugh's face with his handkerchief as he spoke. The blood was oozing from the wound in his side where the bullet had entered. How cruel it seemed that an assassin should be able to take so deadly an aim!

"Did I understand you to say that the spy got killed?" put in Ernest Osborne. How, or by whom?"

"By my own trusty rifle," and the soldier lifted it up as fondly as he would a pet child. "I did it, and I'm glad I did, to avenge a comrade's blood."

"How in the world did you manage to get at him?"

"I'll tell you. It was my turn to relieve guard this morning about four o'clock. Well, I went, accompanied by a relief party, to the post, and made up my mind to stand ready for warm work. So, as you may think, when we found the poor fellow's dead body, we saw that it was no playgame to be even with such scoundrels as these fellows have proved themselves to be. However, after consulting as to what should be done, my party decided to remove to a little distance, taking charge of the body, and awaiting the turn of events, for, you see, we all felt sure that the South-erner was somewhere near. The signal agreed on between us was that I should fire twice if anything suspicious turned up, and then they would immediately draw up. When left to myself I selected a stump on the side of my beat, and stripping off my hat and greatcoat, placed them on the stump

and withdrew to a safe distance. I watched awhile to see if anything turned up, and sure enough, in about half an hour I heard what I thought seemed to be a rustling among the bushes on this side of the ford. Just then my backwoods training served me in good stead, for many a time I've gone down on my knees and listened for the Indians, when they've been perhaps a mile off. So as I listened, I fancied I could detect a rustling among the branches and leaves, and a sort of crackling, as if somebody were creeping along very silently through the little path which skirts the forest just there. I kept still, however, and presently crack went a rifle and my hat fell to the ground. Hearing no noise or reply, I still remained silent, as I told you,—and being more curious than wise, the Southerner went up to examine why it was that the man whom he had just shot could still stand, when, just as he had got to the spot, I raised myself and fired. One shot took effect, and in another minute the fellow lay dead on the ground. Our party came up almost immediately, for hearing two shots, one after the other, they suspected fighting, and they saw how I had avenged the death of our sentry. We then set to work as quickly as we could and made a rough litter with a few branches to bring home our dead comrade. But my time is up, and I must be moving. Will you come with us and identify the poor fellow before our captain, as it is necessary that you must do this before you take charge of his affairs? We purpose giving him a soldier's burial."

"I will go on at once with you," said Ormond. "It is singular that only the other day he told me how to arrange for him in case of his death, and only last evening reminded me of it again, for he seemed to have a presentiment that he should not survive the night. He was some years one of my boys in my Sunday-school class

come in England, and in consequence I know his friends well."

"A Sunday-school boy, was he?" said the officer. "Then that accounts for the fact that we found this little Testament in his breast-pocket. You see, it is stained with his blood, and it is marked in several places, as if he read it, and valued it too." And so saying the officer handed to Ormond the Testament, which he recognized as having been his own gift to Hugh many years before.

It did not take long to secure the necessary documents and papers belonging to Hugh. Ormond knew pretty well the gist of them all, and now added another to his many commissions on behalf of dead soldiers. It was necessary, however, that some one most trustworthy should see to the money which Hugh had saved, on behalf of Mrs. Blake, and carry it to England, and who so fitted as Ormond to do this?

That afternoon poor Hugh was consigned to a soldier's grave. A company of his comrades conveyed his body to its burial place, which was in the outskirts of the forest, and Ormond officiated. As usual, the band played quick martial airs, and fired volleys into the air, after his body was committed to the earth. As they turned away, Ormond recalled gratefully Hugh's outspoken assurance of his faith, and thanked God that there was comfort and hope in his death. Hugh Blake was Ormond Lee's first GARNERED SHEAF.

CHAPTER XXXVII

LIBERTY AND PEACE.

"There are those who fall on the purple field,
In glory's mad career,
Their dying couch, a battered shield;
Their cross of faith, a spear.

"No priest has been there with robes and prayer
To consecrate the dust;
Where the soldier sleeps, his steed sleeps too,
And his gory weapons rust."

ELIZA COOK.

THE great strife was over at last, and peace was proclaimed. Once more the men of that vast Northern army were free to return home to wives, families, and friends, and to resume the occupations of the farm, the factory, the counting-house, and the shop, which the bitter warfare had so rudely interrupted. But there were many bleeding hearts even amid the popular gladness. Mothers mourned for sons, wives wept bitterly for loving husbands, and the scalding silent tears of betrothed ones fell for those who lay far away, sleeping "the sleep that knew no waking." On mountain, moor, and forest, these brave sons of America had fallen; and mingled with the white man's bones was to be found the body of many a negro, who had also taken up arms against his former oppressors, and in defence of the liberty which had dawned upon his down-trodden race at last. Oftener than ever, the blacks held their wonted prayer-meetings; more than ever, they shouted and rejoiced, and most intensely did they realize that like the Israelites of old they were going to leave their Egypt of bondage and sorrow for a free land, where they would share in the rights,

and labours of free men. These "freedmen," as called, were almost like children in the exuberant joy; and little wonder was it that they scarcely to assume the sober responsibilities of life, seeing privilege they had sought for so long, had come at overwhelming suddenness and change. And the land, too—mourned as only a land *can* mourn, for her bravest and her best. There is little doubt the fiery baptism of blood through which America had that fearful time, was a part of the burden which was laid upon her for her guilty connivance, for so the sin of slavery. For this sin—this national sin—came at last, and all over the land might have been heard the wail of "Rachel weeping for her children, that she could not be comforted because they were not."

In addition to this, the calm, strong mind, the man who skilfully and firmly guided the helm of affairs, free of sordid influences, secret bitterness, and public opinion was numbered among the slain, and that by an accident. Not in the forefront of battle—not in the victorious army, or among the captives whom he met with such feelings as to be prepared to assert for the inalienable right to liberty—but when surrounded by admiring people, the fiery messenger sped on his noble and glorious old Abraham Lincoln "was struck by a thrill of sorrowful dismay, in which our two joined heart and soul, the news spread like wildfire through the whole civilized world.

To say, however, Ormond Lee and Ernest Osborne were uninvolved from the dreadful fray. For over three years they had followed the movements of the army up and down the country, and had ministered with Christian courage to the sick and wounded. And that this was

no light task we may well believe. It is one thing to tend a sick man in the quiet ward of a hospital, where no actual danger to life exists, and where surgical skill and culinary art combine to render the treatment effectual; but it is quite another to minister to a wounded man on the field of battle, staunch the flowing life-stream, and bearing him over the heaps of wounded and slain into a place of safety, all the time menaced with death from a thousand bullets. Those who do this work are heroes of the noblest sort, and sometimes, as is most fitting, these heroes seem to live a charmed life. It was so in the case of our friends. Frequently Ormond would stand aghast at himself when he thought of his own temerity, or tremble for Ernest, as he threaded his way out and in among the heaps of dying and dead, while the shrill *whiz* of the bullets rang constantly in his ear. But, as good old Matthew Henry said, "Man is immortal till his work is done," and these two labourers in the cause of humanity were two living exemplifications of the truth. Their bones were not to bleach in a strange land, there was more work yet for them to do.

* * * * *

"And so you have accepted the offer," said Ormond to Ernest Osborne one evening after returning to New York. "Have you well considered it?"

"Yes; I think I have had preliminary training sufficient in the campaign to inure me to the sort of labour connected with the post. I know that a missionary to the freed negroes must not expect a bed of roses. It is not a brilliant position, and I certainly shall not get spoiled by a superabundance of flattery or ease while labouring in it."

"No; you must rather anticipate hardships, trial, and privation, and that without a tithe of the honour which we, as officers of the Sanatory Commission, received. However,

"I don't know that you need be disheartened about that; it should be enough for the disciple that he be as his master."

"Just so, Mr. Lee; and as my mind is made up on the object, nothing now would tempt me to draw back."

The two friends had returned to New York some three or four weeks previously, and Ormond was engaged in looking after his father's business. Meanwhile a demand for both male and female missionaries to the freed negroes, arose, for what was the use of giving a people freedom, without teaching them how to use the boon aright? The African in bondage is very much like an overgrown child, with very little forethought or energy. And when thrown suddenly into the wide world, destitute alike of means or employment, it became necessary to begin at the beginning, and while making temporary provision for their more immediate wants, to train them into habits of industry, self-reliance, and energy, by slow degrees. Otherwise the sudden change in their circumstances would have been disastrous to the majority, rather than beneficial. In response, men and women, fired with the spirit of self-abnegation, volunteered for this work, and among them was Ernest Osborne, whose recommendations, which were of the highest character, caused him to be immediately accepted.

"Do you imagine that you will be required to remain much longer in New York?" continued Ernest. "How goes business with you?"

"Very slowly; so that I have no idea when I shall be able to leave. During the war our business relations in the States have remained almost in abeyance, and it is no slight task to revive them now. Some of the houses with whom we did business have failed, others have become extinct, or nearly so, in consequence of the death or removal of princi-

pals. Some few are now commencing again, and with these I have succeeded in opening a correspondence. Still, it will be a work of months—if not years—to resuscitate the affair, so as to make it the profitable concern it was once. And then again, on account of the deportation of slave-labour from the South, and the land lying out of cultivation, there are no crops worth speaking of. Cotton, sugar, tobacco, rice, and all the rest of the commodities in which we dealt, are scarcely to be obtained for love or money. The country will require years to set herself right.”

“There is no doubt of it. Civil war is a scourge in which both sides suffer more or less. And the political, social, and family strife to which this war has given rise, is almost incredible. Whole families have been divided and estranged by their espousing different sides in the quarrel. Our duty as Christians, manifestly, is to make the occasion one of increasing labour for the good of the country generally.”

“You are right,” returned Ormond. “I, however, feel as if I should like to be home again. My news from home is somewhat saddening; my little nephew is still sinking, and I fear I shall not see him alive again if I delay my return much longer. However, I must set the business on its legs again as well as I can, and then——”

“It will not be long before Liverpool sees you?”

“You are right. It will not.”

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

NEW ENGLAND.

"Does Pastor Greenwood live here?"

"He does," returned a bright, fairy-looking little thing all smiles and curls. "Do you wish to see him very much?"

"I do, because I solemnly promised his son during his last hours that I would come, and I am come now solely in fulfilment of that promise."

The smiles fled, and the sparkling blue eyes filled with tears in a moment.

"Papa has seen very few strangers ever since the news came. You see we are in mourning for him. But I know he will be only too glad to see you."

"Him" was the son and brother whom Ormond had seen depart for the "better country" on that memorable night when summoned from the negro prayer-meeting; and now, in fulfilment of his promise, he had made his way to Massachusetts on purpose to see the aged pastor of whom the dying soldier spoke.

Beechville was but a small village in New England, one of the many prosperous, stirring, active little places with which that part of America abounds. It was somewhat out of his way, but having given his word to the dying soldier, Ormond felt bound to fulfil it. Some six months had gone by since the close of the war, and that time had been spent in re-establishing Mr. Lee's New York business. As was to be anticipated, this was a work of time, and it was not without the most assiduous exertions that Ormond had so far revived it as to be able to leave it in the hands of agents.

It seemed now, however, as if, when the cotton supplies again came to hand, that it would go on as before. The principal business done at this New York establishment was the exporting of American produce to the Liverpool house; and this could only be done as before, when the palmy days of prosperous crops should again be the lot of the American people. Having placed things in ship-shape order, Ormond bade "good-bye" to New York, and bent his way homeward through the New England states, intending to sail from Boston. Beside Pastor Greenwood, he had promised to see the young surgeon's mother, "away up in Massachusetts," as the dying lad had phrased it; and as the homes of these two bereaved ones were fortunately very near together, Ormond meant to take them both on his way. He had seen the poor childless widow, and had imparted to her his reminiscences of her dead lad; and now, after making this last visit, he would soon be on his way to Liverpool.

For some minutes after his admission, Ormond waited in the little entrance-hall, picturing to himself what the old pastor would be like. This young lady was the "Nellie" of whom the young man spoke—his only sister, and the last remaining child. There was something about her extremely pleasing at first sight, and this pleasure only deepened as acquaintance increased. There was a depth of tenderness, and a refined sort of sensibility which captivated Ormond's imagination, and made him mentally wish that he could have a longer acquaintance with her than the occasion promised. But while he was revolving the question in his own mind, the old gentleman came in. He was a tall, thin man with white hair, and wearing glasses. He stooped a little, but not so much with age, it seemed, as with grief, for if you looked at him attentively you could see that "Time's defacing fingers" had not done all the devastation visible on that

pale face. There was a settled melancholy on his features, and an absent air about him, as if his thoughts were far away with some dearly loved one.

Ormond rose and presented his card, at the same time speaking of his errand there.

"Come into my study, my dear friend," said the pastor. "There is no need of formalities between you and me. Nellie and I will be glad to welcome you, because of your kindness to our loved one on the field of battle. Now come in and tell me all about it, just as you would if you had known me always."

And he led Ormond with both hands into the little square study, where he usually spent most of the day. Nellie was somewhere in the back regions, doing duty as housekeeper.

Ormond told his story quietly and fully, but as sympathizingly as he could. He could see that it was opening the old wound afresh to do so, and making it bleed sorely, but there was the hungering and thirsting of a soul anxious to learn *all it could* of its lost dear one; and it would not be satisfied without the narration of every little incident, however trivial. Just such an experience as this have thousands of bereaved ones passed through before—especially when the lost one has died far away; every little word or incident which can be repeated by those who acted the part of watchers by the dying pillow, is treasured up with fond remembrance. And how much less bitter must such an experience as *this* be, compared with the bitter agony of those who have lost children—friends—knowing not when or where! Thousands have gone down to unknown graves in forest, desert, and ocean, and no human eye has seen; while those who have been left behind, have sorrowed with neither hope nor comfort.

The old man listened to it all in silence, leaning forward with his elbows on the table, and hiding the workings of his face with his hands. As Ormond concluded, he laid the young soldier's letters and papers on the table in a sealed packet, just as he had done them up at the time of his death. Mr. Greenwood opened the packet with trembling fingers, and hurriedly looked them over, but the sight of the familiar handwriting was too much for him; his eyes were too full of tears to permit him to peruse them.

"Thank you, Mr. Lee: you have ministered consolation to a sorrowing, lonely old man, and may the Lord bless you abundantly! You see that I am almost alone now in the evening of my days; only my little daughter Nellie is with me, and she is my right hand, but the other two of my family are in heaven. Many years ago my beloved wife, the wife of my youth, was taken—cut down with a stroke—and then I was left with two sweet babes. John was the eldest, and my pride; he would have made a noble man had he been spared, but in God's inscrutable providence he has gone home before me. Still, sir, I bless God that the dreadful stigma of slavery is to die out of our land; true, some of our bravest and best must necessarily have been offered up as sacrifices on the altar of bloodshed, and what am I that I should not bear the burden of bereavement as well as others! Still, it is hard to lose an only son, and I *so* depended on him! Thank God that he died in the faith!"

"That is an abiding comfort, Mr. Greenwood," returned Ormond. "And though by his early death your son is separated from you for a time, yet, as you partake of the same faith, the parting is not for ever."

"True, true; but sometimes the father's feelings gain strength, and the believer's faith is obscured. Now, I am sure you must need rest and refreshment, and Nellie will be

only too glad to wait on you, and testify our gratitude to you in every possible way. And now, my dear sir, let me beg of you to consider yourself our guest for a few days at least."

"I must not stay so long, Mr. Greenwood. I have been away from home for nearly four years, and am longing to see Liverpool once more. Nevertheless, if I can oblige you in any way, I will remain with you until to-morrow."

"To-morrow! we cannot think of letting you go so soon. Here, Nellie, take Mr. Lee into the parlour, and make him welcome with the best that our house affords. And remember, sir, that for John's sake I shall expect you to give me a little more time."

Nellie tripped along before him, leading the way into the sombre quaint parlour—or "keeping-room," as the New Englanders phrase it—and Ormond could not choose but acquiesce. Once there, Nellie insisted on his making himself comfortable, and placed before him such an abundance of good things, made and cooked by her own dainty fingers, that he made a sumptuous repast. Nellie was an adept at pastry-making, preserving, stuffing, and roasting, and for the stranger who had relieved and watched over her darling brother, she produced her very best. Then, leaving Ormond for half an hour she crept into her father's study, and there the two, father and daughter, mingled their tears together over the mementoes of the loved and lost. Time fled very quickly while engaged in the interesting task, and Ormond was amusing himself in Nellie's flower-garden when she rejoined him again."

"I hope I am taking no liberty," said Ormond. "It is so long since I saw such a quiet home scene as this, that it seems like a new pleasure."

"Yes, I dare say. John used to write to us, when he

was with the army, and tell us what fearful sights he had to witness. In this little harbour we used to spend hours over our lessons, or our play. Ah! we little thought when John went away that it was the last time! War is a dreadful thing—don't you think so?"

"Yes, and should only be resorted to between nations when all other means of conciliation have failed. War is a disgrace to nations calling themselves Christian. At this moment, I doubt not, thousands of homes are full of weeping and sorrow because of it. Still, there are causes—justifiable causes—for which, when all other means have failed, a Christian nation might justly go to war."

Ormond's intended stay of a day lengthened into a week before he bade Beechville farewell. There was so much to see, and so much to enjoy of New England life and scenery, that he was not loath to remain. And then, coming on the errand he did, everybody wanted to feast him and to honour him; so that go where he would, the Englishman was entertained with true American hospitality. Finally, there was Nellie Greenwood, who had captivated Ormond's heart as no woman had ever captivated it before. Before leaving he asked Mr. Greenwood to permit him to fill as far as practicable, the place of his dead son, by becoming Nellie's husband. And neither Nellie nor her father said nay.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A WIDOW INDEED.

"I have marked it well, it must be true,
Death never takes one alone, but two;
Whenever he enters in at a door,
Be it roof of gold, or roof of thatch,
He leaves it always on the latch,
And comes again e'er the year is o'er."

"AH! Mr. Lee, I knew I should never see him again," mourned Mrs. Blake, as she listened to the recital of her son's death from Ormond's lips. "I knew very well that I had looked upon his face for the last time when he wished me good-bye, before going away. Something seemed to tell me so."

"We cannot account for these impressions. I sometimes think they are sent for warnings by a kindly Providence, so that the blow shall not fall totally unlooked for at last. Hugh had much the same kind of presentiment on the evening before his death."

"Had he? Tell me all about it."

"I met him in the evening, just before dusk, and he told me that he had sent a letter to you as well as to his former landlady in Canada. I believe that letter was in reference to his savings, the last one that you ever received, was it not? Yes. Well, Hugh seemed very downcast and fearful of he scarcely knew what, but as he was ordered to mount guard that night, it was his duty to obey. The Wampiquinnock Ford, where he was stationed, was notorious as a dangerous post; and three sentries had been shot down previously. But with a manly courage he went to the post, and fell, doing his duty."

"Ah! my poor, poor Hugh! Why *did* he go away? Now that I am bereft of him I am lonely indeed. I am worse off than poor old Jacob, and he mourned so much for his one darling, that he said his gray hairs would go down with sorrow to the grave, because of his loss."

As she mourned, and lamented, never attempting to check the tears which rained in such torrents down her pale cheeks, Ormond remembered the quaint words of old Thomas Fuller:—"Those widows who have once had children, and afterward have lost them, are the most desolate; and if they be old and poor, then is their lot most pitiful and woful." It was a saddening sight to see the poor bereaved mother mourning the son who was all the world to her, and who had been, in the dealings of an inscrutable providence, snatched away by an untimely death. But so it is all the world over. We look upon one and another, who seem indispensable to the position, or household, or post, in which they are placed, and while realizing how intensely useful they are, and how diligently they are performing the work assigned to them, we imagine how impossible it would be ever to do without them. But suddenly there comes along some crushing stroke of Providence, and the strong man is laid low, the unwearied worker is snatched away, and it seems as if nothing can compensate for the loss. Our best-beloved ones are cut off like a flower, and those who are missed the most are taken first, while those whose lives are nothing but a curse to their country and their times, are permitted to linger on. The maze of Providence is at times most bewildering; our finite understandings fail to read the why and the wherefore of this or that dispensation, and in blind weakness we are driven back, though at times half despairingly, upon the assurance, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." How many sad,

stormed-tossed, bereaved hearts have clung to that promise, when the waves and the billows of tribulation have been dashing in fierce fury over them, we shall never know, until that great day which reveals all secrets.

But it may serve us to remember that *long* life is not necessarily *real* life. At thirty, one person may have accomplished more real good than another may at threescore and ten. By this does the Almighty measure life; and so, while we are mourning that a life is cut suddenly short, angels may be rejoicing at the fulness of the work which that life has performed for Christ.

"Yes," continued Mrs. Blake, "I've known my troubles, if ever any woman has. My mother never could make us a comfortable home, like other people, on account of father's continued absence with his regiment; and from my youth I had to earn my daily bread before I could eat it. This led me to marry young, and you will think it singular that, after suffering so much from the discomforts of barrack life, I should have married a soldier. True, it was not much of a prospect for me; but one friend nearer than all the world beside, is a blessing. We were stationed at Plymouth for a long time, and there we could do pretty middling. I was clever at my needle, and the colonel's wife supplied me with plenty of work. Then we were ordered abroad, and that was the beginning of troubles. Our little Hugh was born abroad, and soon after his birth my husband died. Then I was a widow in a strange land. Then I came home to Liverpool and settled; and here, after a time, as my mother was dead, my father joined me. My next trial was parting with Hugh, and a bitter one that was, for I clung to him *so* much. Then my father died, and I realized my loneliness all the more; but still I hoped to be reunited with Hugh again, and was prepared to go to Canada, if

Hugh had wished it. But now he is gone, and I am like Naomi of old, without either child or husband."

I ought to have mentioned that old Mr. Logan had died before Hugh. It often happens thus in a family, one death being the harbinger of another. This will account for Mrs. Blake's utter loneliness.

"You will never lack a friend, Mrs. Blake, while you can plead God's promises. 'A judge of the widow, and a father of the fatherless, is God in his holy habitation.'" Ormond scarcely knew what to say or how to minister consolation to the stricken heart. All the comfort he could impart to Mrs. Blake seemed to pass unheeded and unappreciated.

"Hugh, my poor Hugh," wandered on the poor mother, "used to tell me in his letters that he was making a home for me out there in Canada, and many a time I've pictured to myself the happy time we should have when reunited together in our own home. Every letter he sent he would tell me how his work was going on, and how much he was saving, till I seemed to know as much about his affairs as if I had been there with them. And father would sit by the hour dwelling on the pleasures of a Canadian farmer's life. You see he had been to Quebec once, and knew all about it. I think Hugh could have done pretty well in Liverpool, but the old passion for wandering ran in his blood, and as he would not pain me by becoming a soldier here against my wish, he took up with emigration as a kind of make-shift. And I gave in to him, for the sake of his peace of mind, little thinking what the end would be."

"It was impossible that you should imagine what the end would be, dear Mrs. Blake," returned Ormond. "We are not like the Almighty, seeing the end from the beginning, or we should avoid some things which unexpectedly entail the greatest consequences. As long as we live here we

must live this half-blind sort of life, walking most truly, not by sight, but by faith."

"Yes, yes, it is too true; but oh! if I could have seen it! If only I had refused to consent to his going, he might have been here now."

"It is some comfort to consider that you are not left destitute, although so lonely."

"Yes, thank God! I am far from destitute. What with my son's savings and my own work, as long as my strength keeps up I shall never want. And my sight keeps good still, which is another mercy."

Ormond had been the bearer of more than fifty pounds to Mrs. Blake, this being the entire proceeds realized by the settlement of Hugh's affairs. It seemed a mine of wealth to Mrs. Blake. But her wants were few and her employers considerate, so that, as she said, she was far from destitute. Hugh's legacy, measured by her frugality, would go a long way.

"I shall bring my sister Ada to see you, Mrs. Blake. I am sure you will like her, and for the sake of your son, whom Ada remembers, she will only be too glad to do you any service." Ormond felt almost unable to cope with the matter, for every now and again Mrs. Blake's tears would flow copiously, and, man-like, he was miserably nervous at the sight of a crying woman. Tears will either unnerve or exasperate a man; he does not cultivate the emotional part of his nature as much as a woman does, so that he understands tears less than he does arguments. He can reason a point out with patience and acuteness, but the very sight of impulsive weeping will drive him half-crazy. Ormond could have discussed ways and means with Mrs. Blake, or have helped her in any way to make her path of life smoother, but he could not cope with her bitter, over-

whelming grief. He could not fathom the depths of the mother's sorrow, and very rightly he resolved to enlist his sister in the work of comforting and soothing.

Not such an easy work after all. Nothing is more trying, both to the mental and spiritual constitution, than to visit among the abodes of sickness, sorrow, and privation. To sensitive spirits, quick to feel and eager to sympathize, the task is very hard, and nothing but a sense of duty, or a large degree of love, will sustain in the work. And very often a woman succeeds where a man fails, as a visitor to the sick and needy. Her clear perception, and quick sense of what is wanting, will lead her almost intuitively to touch the right chord, and to secure a response. Ada Lee had a heart of sympathy with all that was "good, or lovely, or of good report;" she would gladly recognize a sister believer, even though hidden in the disguise of a workhouse garb; and honour the lowly souls, who, though walking in the valley of humiliation all their lives, had attained at last to greatness in the kingdom of heaven. And while quick to discern spiritual excellencies, she never forgot that suffering saints possessed bodies as well as souls. *She* would never make the mistake of going to a poor woman's garret and saying, "Be ye warmed and fed," without seeing that means were forthcoming by which fuel and food could be procured. Exhortation and tract distribution alone, although most excellent agencies for good, do not feed the hungry, warm the fireless, or clothe the naked; and very often one must attend to these bodily wants before attempting to cope with the soul's greater needs. To all those who aim to be successful labourers in this department of the vineyard, we would recommend the practical counsels of James the Apostle, remembering that while "pure and undefiled religion before God is—to visit

the fatherless and widows in their affliction," yet, "If one of you say unto them, Depart in peace; be ye warmed, and filled; notwithstanding, ye give them not those things which are needful for the body, what doth it profit?"

CHAPTER XL.

OPPOSITE CHARACTERS.

"Of all the words I ever have seen,
The saddest are these—It might have been."

A YOUNG man with closely-cropped hair and worn features was engaged in low, earnest conversation with Ormond Lee. It was the early spring-time, and the two sat by the side of a bright, cheerful fire, in Ormond's snug sitting-room. The countenances of both wore a grave and serious aspect, as if revolving some knotty problem; but on the stranger's face one could detect deeper lines than any imprinted there by either care or toil. One must have been a dull reader of faces not to have discovered there traces of shame, sin, and remorse,—things which put years on to a man's look. In advanced life the features are more set, so that they disclose but little of one's real emotions for the time being, although in the march of years the character has inevitably set its seal upon the face; but in youth the countenance is almost as easy to be deciphered as the printed page. If sorrow, with its overwhelming clouds, has darkened the life, a heavy, sad mien tells the tale to observant beholders; if shame has held sway over the soul, the eye betrays it; and remorse

will write its tale even more legibly still. Charlie Hobbs' face told all this and more. He was no more the light-hearted, merry fellow of old, seeing a jest and a joke in everything, but a broken-down, guilty, despairing young man. As he sat there, discussing ways and means with Ormond, his old teacher, you could see that "the gall and the wormwood," which always follow sin, had been his portion.

"I'm sure I don't know what to do or where to go! My parents can't keep me,—indeed I could not allow them to do it. As to obtaining a situation in Liverpool, it's out of the question. Nobody will employ a jail-bird;" and he laughed a hard, bitter, mocking laugh. "As to trying in another place, I've neither heart nor character to do so."

"What did you do while in prison?"

"Oh! anything and everything almost. I was compelled to take my turn at cooking and cleaning, at certain intervals; and then at all other times I was employed in net-making and oakum-picking, along with heavier work. No such thing as idleness there, sir, I assure you."

"And how did you pass the time when not at work?"

"In thinking, mostly, and that was awful. I had little appetite for reading, even if I had had plenty of leisure, which I had not. But at night when all was quiet, and we were all locked in our cells, then I used to torment myself with thoughts of *what might have been*. And then the remembrance of home and friends would rise up and unman me. But I dare not say anything, or make any noise, for there was a place in the door of my cell where the warder could look in and see what I was about in a moment. It's fearful to live like that for so long."

"Were your friends permitted to see you?"

"Not very often. Only once now and then, but each

visit made me worse than before. I could have borne my punishment better had there been no one to fret or trouble about me. When I was coming out, father said that he would be there to meet me, if I chose, but I couldn't have that. I begged him not to come. If you, sir, cannot help me in some way, I must beg the money to emigrate."

"Well, since you speak of emigration, I think it is decidedly the best course for you to take. In a new country you would have a much better chance, and possibly you might never meet with a single individual who knew your history. Have you considered this step seriously?"

"No, sir, one reason being want of funds to undertake it. I'm not ashamed to tell you, sir, because I know you were always my friend, and if I had listened to you I should never have been situated like this, but I could tell no one else. I am a poor miserable waif on the surface of this great city, and if no helping hand be extended to me, I must inevitably sink lower than I have."

Poor Charlie! All his old cleverness and vanity had been swallowed up in the miserable gulf into which he had fallen. Nothing remained of "the orator" now, except the ability to implore a little help. The rule always holds good that a man who has been immured in prison for crime is never the same afterward. The consciousness of his fall is always present to him, and in his intercourse with others he feels it very painfully.

"Well, the best thing you can do is to make up your mind to emigrate to some one of the colonies. I see with you that you have no chance here. Every avenue will be closed against you in consequence of your antecedents. But if you make up your mind to emigrate, want of means shall not be the hindrance. Trust me, Charlie, the old regard remains for you still. I would advise you to consider

the matter over with your parents, and make up your mind as to which colony you would choose. Then see me again."

Just then the servant announced another visitor, and presented the card of the new-comer to Ormond. It was Edward Telford's, but Ormond thoughtfully prevented any *rencontre* between the two former schoolfellows, by directing the man to show the visitor into the drawing-room. He was anxious to spare Charlie all the humiliation possible.

"I will, sir, and as for your kindness, I cannot trust myself to say what I wish. You don't know how much you will accomplish for me by this step, for I was fast growing desperate."

"Don't do that, Charlie. Keep alive some trust in God and try to do right. Now, good-night, and I hope you will be able to start in life again fairly."

"Good-night, sir, and a thousand thanks."

When Charlie Hobbs had gone, Ormond was free to receive his best-beloved scholar. Edward Telford was, as he deserved to be, a prime favourite with all who knew him. His refinement and frankness of manner, his varied intelligence, and his pleasing style of conversation, added to the consecration of heart and life which pervaded his every word and action, made him beloved by all. To Ormond he was indeed "a brother beloved."

"Well, my dear friend, here I am, as you see; I managed to get a short holiday from my college tutor, and have run down to greet you again, after your long absence. I could not wait until the end of the term."

Edward was at Cambridge, and had nearly completed his course of study there. He had taken his B.A. degree, and was now working hard for the realization of the dearest dream of his life—the ministry. And Ada was heart and soul with him in the vocation he had chosen.

"And I am doubly pleased to see you. Your letters were very welcome to me while with the army; they seemed to nerve me for labour and endurance in the arduous work I had undertaken. Very often when overcome with hunger, fatigue, sickness, or loneliness, my letters from home came like a new inspiration, and, with my faithful companion at my side, I was ready to go anywhere or do anything."

"You mean Ernest Osborne?"

"Yes."

"How is he getting on? I remember him when a boy,—a bright, shrewd, intelligent fellow."

"He is doing well. He filled a responsible situation in a religious tract and book depot until the war, and then he went to the seat of war, in the service of the Sanatory Commission. It was not a bed of roses, I assure you, and he laboured without stint. Indeed, he would have sacrificed himself, time and again, had I not been at hand to warn him."

"Noble fellow! What is he doing now?"

"He accepted a post as missionary and teacher to the freedmen, which was offered him immediately at the termination of the war. And there is no doubt but that he was eminently fitted for it. I never knew one in whom the spirit of self-denial was so strong. Self-sacrifice was quite a ruling passion with him."

"And so it is with you, my dear friend and teacher," said Edward. "From whom have your lads caught the spirit if not from you? You may see in Ernest Osborne's career only the reflection of your own. And in him I hail a co-labourer in the great work of benefiting mankind. All other pursuits pale before the glory of this."

"You are right. If I had no other reward of my Sabbath-school labours than this,—that you and Ernest were labour-

ing in the Lord's great harvest field,—it would be abundantly enough."

"But this will not be the only reward. Your influence will go on extending and reproducing itself until time shall end. Whatever measure of success in the salvation of souls may be vouchsafed to me, will form part of your crown of rejoicing, seeing that you have had the principal share in leading me to the work. Oh! sometimes, when I think of the great task on which I am soon to enter, I feel almost overpowered; its magnitude is such that an angel may well ask, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' But the promise never fails, 'As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee.'"

"With all the fervour of which I am capable, I wish you God-speed. Had Providence pointed out the way, I should have been a minister or missionary myself. For years I yearned for the work, but as it was not to be, I resigned my hopes, and did quietly what my hand found to do. You, Edward, will be able to do what I never could. You will be permitted to enter into the vineyard and gather those sheaves which I only beheld at a distance."

Ormond spoke sadly and feelingly.

"But you *have* gathered some rich sheaves for the Master's garner!" urged Telford. "You forget Hugh Blake! Was he not one? And others on those battle-fields were surely brought to the Master's feet by you. Never forget, my dear friend," added Telford earnestly, "that although you have not accomplished all you wished, you have yet garnered many sheaves for Christ."

CHAPTER XLI.

AN EVENING TALK.

"I THINK this New England charmer must be a very powerful one, brother, since she has drawn away all your heart from us."

"Not quite, Ada. Nellie occupies a very warm corner in my heart, I admit, but I have room for you too." Ormond and his sister were enjoying a quiet moonlight walk—a not unusual thing with them.

"Now, confess, Ormond; were you not sorry to leave America?"

"No, Ada. I was too glad to see you all once more. You little know the home-yearning which creeps over a man after a prolonged absence from home. I *so* longed to see you all; letters rarely satisfy the soul. And Frank—you know Frank was going home as you thought."

"Yes; dear boy. But it will not be long now. I saw him this morning, and I could not hear him speak without putting my ear down close to his mouth. It will not be much longer, I think, that he will linger here."

"Edward Telford tells me that he is greatly pleased with his testimony for Jesus. I think I showed you his letter which he sent me at the seat of war, did I not? What he said to Telford was much like that in spirit and sentiment, but fuller and riper. Telford says that there is no doubt but that God has taught him."

"I think Frank is very fond of Edward. He always *would* talk to him most openly and freely; and they seemed to understand each other."

"Edward seems to be a capital visitor of the sick. And his enthusiasm for the work is something grand. I was talking to him last evening about it, and he certainly cheered me greatly as I thought of my past efforts for him. They have not been in vain by any means."

"Neither will they, brother. You only see a few results cropping up here and there, but they will go on multiplying and extending as long as time shall last. I think that Edward Telford will make one of the brightest jewels in your crown of rejoicing. Let me praise him to you, brother, for I cannot do much in that way before any of the others. They think that I might do better than cast in my lot with a minister—that perhaps I might have caught a rich merchant, or landed proprietor, or possibly a titled suitor. You know the commonly received opinion of the world—that a girl who wins one or another of such as these for her husband has 'done well.' No matter if he be old enough to be her father, ugly enough for a Midas, ignorant enough for a clown; if he be rich it is all right, his money covers a multitude of sins. Don't you see illustrations of this every day?"

"Yes, so often that I have wondered that such a state of things could exist among a Christian and enlightened people. It is evident, however, that such is not the case with you."

"Things didn't go very smoothly part of the time you were away. I was pretty often made to feel that I had adopted a singular course, especially at one time. But Edward, with his usual determination and decision, talked to papa, and quieted his dislike for ever. Since then things have been more agreeable. Whatever others may think of Edward, I think him a noble-minded, Christian young man—one who deserves the highest kind of honour, as to a very

great degree a self-made man in respect of his attainments. And, best of all, they were all sanctified by the most devoted, single-hearted piety."

"You are right. I think it highly probable that a long course of usefulness is awaiting Telford. God has led him so markedly toward his present position that we cannot doubt but that it is for some great end. But, Ada, are you prepared to second Edward in his labours? Remember that the lot of a minister's wife is no sinecure."

"I know it, Ormond. I do not expect to be a fine lady of fashion in my future life, neither am I now. I expect to have to second my husband's endeavours in the work of doing good. But you know I never cared much for fashionable amusement; and as to 'killing time,' as people say, I have had very little time to spare for the killing process lately."

Which was quite true, for Ada Lee was no fine lady intent upon her own selfish pleasures and pastimes, but a humble follower and imitator of Him who went about doing good. She was well known as a succourer of the lonely and friendless, and she shared her private allowance most liberally with those poor or afflicted ones of her acquaintance who stood in need. She went about her work in the true love of it, too, which is more than can be said of every worker.

"I am glad you have no wish to kill time. Nothing is more despicable than to see that butterfly of life, a young lady of fashion, trying to kill time by one frivolous pursuit and another. As if life were not altogether too short and fleeting for such nonsense!"

"Sometimes it is for want of thought, brother. Hood says:—

"'Evil is wrought from want of thought,
As well as want of heart.'"

I think it is often so in the world. Many young ladies of my acquaintance, who are really good-hearted and generous, never think of the suffering and needy. If they did I am certain they would act differently. And when one looks abroad on the vice, and sin, and misery that is all around us, it is *so* saddening. It is difficult to believe that any efforts put forth by us or our fellow-workers will ever prove victorious over evil."

"It is, I grant you, but faith can surmount even that. Such a thought is only born of unbelief. The small efforts put forth by the labourers in God's vineyard amount in the aggregate to an immense power for good. The army of Christian workers is numerous enough to present a mighty phalanx to the powers of evil. And though the seed may lie buried long it will yet spring up into new life, sometimes when we least expect it. Natural phenomena are marvelously like the operations of the gospel. For instance, look at the acorn. One would little imagine that a mighty growth lay snugly hidden away in the bosom of that insignificant little seed. But plant it, give it the rains and snows of winter, and the sunshine and soft breezes of summer, and see what it attains to. Year after year, possibly century after century, rolls on, and still the oak grows. Then in its season it becomes part of the mighty man-of-war, or affords timbers towards the construction of a vessel which shall sail on errands of benevolence round the world. In winter the earth is silent and bare, but the seed is buried there, and if we only wait it will appear in varied forms of luxuriance and beauty. Spring makes the blade, summer fashions the ear, and autumn ripens the full corn in the ear. This is much like the seed of the kingdom. It needs to be sown diligently and trustfully, and in due time, according to the promise, the reaping-time comes."

"Yes; we need to anticipate that time very often, or discouragements and delays would induce us to relinquish our work altogether. And I cannot account for it, but at times I am sad and depressed, more than you would think it possible, as I think of all which is yet remaining to be done."

"Thoughtful workers are always sad ones at times. But they are none the worse for it. You remember the passage, do you not, 'going forth *weeping*, bearing precious seed?' And work for Christ always ennobles the workers. In olden times to bear the shield or standard before a prince into the thick of the fight, conferred nobility on the bearer. Much more does our work confer a heavenly nobility on us, seeing that we are 'workers together with God.' And most true it is that there is yet 'much land to be possessed.'"

"I suppose you will keep up your connection with the Sunday-school even after you reach America?" said Ada, after a pause.

The two were standing now near the pier, looking out upon the ships' lanterns which glistened in the rigging of the various vessels anchored there. The stars shone out with a quiet lustre of their own, but the moon cast fitful gleams upon the scene before them. It was still enough to hear the plash of the water against the vessels, and the hoarse calls of the seamen in the distance.

"Yes, Ada. Did I suppose that the result of my new life in America would be to wean me away from my vocation, I would draw back from the step without delay. When I am on the other side of the Atlantic I hope to renew my consecration of heart and life. Nellie Greenwood is not the woman I take her to be if she attempts to withdraw me from my allegiance to God. And her father is, as I know well,

a fellow-worker in the same vineyard. We shall be able to bid one another God-speed."

On reaching home, Ormond found a hasty messenger from Frank Huntingdon's bedside.

CHAPTER XLII.

FRANK'S DEPARTURE.

"I would be like an angel, and with the angels stand,
A crown upon my forehead, a harp within my hand.
There right before my Saviour, so glorious and so bright,
I'd make the sweetest music, and serve Him day and night.

"I never should grow weary, nor ever shed a tear,
Nor ever know a sorrow, nor ever feel a fear;
But blessed, pure, and holy, I'd dwell in Jesus' sight,
And with ten thousand angels, praise Him both day and night."

"PLEASE come at once. Frank cannot rest without seeing you. He is sinking fast, but he craves for his Uncle Ormond."

Such was the message which awaited the brother and sister as they returned home, and without a moment's delay the two started for Mr. Huntingdon's residence.

Straw was strewn on the roadway in front of the handsomely built house, and the knocker was muffled, so that no sounds of the bustle and turmoil of the outside world should interfere with the repose of him who was passing from time into eternity. As Ormond and Ada passed in, they were struck by the stillness which reigned throughout the dwelling. Even the servants' quarters were noiseless, which was a strange thing for them, seeing that if any clatter was

made at all, it was made by them. A young footman met them as they entered, and to Ormond's whispered inquiry said, "Almost over, sir—almost gone." Not staying to hear more, they went upstairs very quietly, and proceeded straight to Frank's room. On a little low bed lay extended the dying boy, worn to a skeleton. The clothes were thrown partly back, and the window was open to give a little coolness to the burning, fainting frame, and to disperse a current of freshness through the heavy close air of the apartment. By his side, kneeling down, and holding his worn wasted hands, was Mrs. Huntingdon, while Mr. Huntingdon was pacing to and fro with noiseless steps, shedding ever and anon such bitter tears as only a man can shed. Yet every now and then he would stop to look on the face of his son with such a helpless, despairing look that it was heart-aching to see him. Mr. Huntingdon had hoped against hope, during the course of his boy's illness, that he would recover. Even when assured by the physicians that there was no hope, he clung to the belief with an unconquerable buoyancy of temperament which led him to eschew all anticipation of the evil day. But when the evil day had come at last—when Mr. Huntingdon had been summoned in haste from his counting-house, and had left the intricate mazes of bill-books and ledgers to come and see his only son die, he looked on like a startled, bewildered being, utterly helpless and stupefied before the presence of death. That mighty conqueror was too powerful and awful for the father's soul, and knowing not how the sting could be extracted, he sorrowed in inexpressible anguish. All these years he had been gaining and hoarding for Frank's sake, dreaming fondly of the time to come when his boy should win admiration and greatness from the world. He had thought nothing of the deeper needs of the soul; wealth and distinction formed "the

one thing needful" to him, and if Frank in his boyish earnestness ever mentioned anything respecting his hopes and beliefs, it was quickly put aside. Now, in presence of the great change which was soon to pass upon Frank, Mr. Huntingdon was helplessly and hopelessly bewildered. Frank was looking after his father with a serious, troubled look, and as he caught Ormond's eye he whispered to him, although very feebly, "Poor papa! poor papa! he will not be comforted."

Mr. Huntingdon caught the words, and losing all command over himself, said, "No, how can I? It is too hard; I cannot understand it. Why should it be so, that you, my only child, should be taken away?"

Frank looked with such tender pity at his father's agony, that he would fain have comforted him, but he could not. Turning to Ormond he said, "Uncle, I charge you, comfort poor papa when I am gone. And teach him about the land where I am going."

"I will do my best, Frank," whispered Ormond.

"And mamma; please, mamma, promise me to read a chapter out of my little Bible every morning to papa; will you?"

"Oh! my boy, what shall I do without you?" was Mrs. Huntingdon's agonized exclamation. "I shall miss you most terribly."

"I know you will, mamma; but you will meet me again, will you not? Promise me that you will."

"Yes, Frank, I will try."

"And you will read my Bible every morning to papa, will you not? Promise me that too, mamma."

"Yes, Frank, I promise, I will do it, God helping me."

Mrs. Huntingdon was not quite the same butterfly of fashion which she had been in time past. The influence of

her son's boyish faith and fortitude of spirit, in pain and sickness, had had a wonderful effect upon her. She had learned to estimate at very much its true value the glare and glitter of the world, and although not a Christian, she yet was not so inveterate a worldling as when we first knew her. In many cases the passage from worldliness and sin to Christ is performed by slow degrees. The soul gets gradually weaned from its old pursuits by the refining influence of trial; the cords of sinful pleasures and attachments are only snapped one by one as the emptiness of earth becomes more and more apparent; and life becomes emptier of mean frivolities, and fuller of greater, nobler objects. But Mrs. Huntingdon had not yet attained to this. She only knew that the selfishness, the frivolity, and the prayerlessness of her past life had become hateful to her, when viewed by the calm, pure light which had emanated from her son's sick-room. For a long time past she had been almost sole nurse to her boy, and like a true mother, her heart had found consolation in the task. No servant or hireling nurse could be trusted now to minister to Frank's comfort and rest, and the lessons she learned of him were garnered up in her memory, destined to bear a bounteous harvest in future years. She no longer wondered at Frank's predilection for his uncle's company and conversation; she understood now that there was a spiritual bond between her brother and her child which was lacking in her. If self-knowledge be the first real step to all true wisdom, then Mrs. Huntingdon had attained to this; for as she knelt by her boy's bedside she knew full well that she, who a short time since had believed herself to be in lack of nothing, was now, as it regarded the soul, blind and miserable, and naked and destitute of everything which could comfort this life, and brighten the next. And it occurred to her most forcibly

that had the summons to die come to her, instead of to her son, she should have shrunk from it in dismay.

"Frank, my boy," said Ormond, "how do you feel about dying? Are you afraid of it?"

"No, uncle; Jesus is waiting to receive me. You know he carries the lambs in his bosom."

"Are you in much pain?"

"No."

"Do you remember what David said?—'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.'"

Just then a spasm of pain stole over the lad, and the dusky hue which precedes dissolution rested on his features. Mrs. Huntingdon moistened his lips with a little wine, and this for a few minutes revived him. Then he spoke again.

"Dying is not hard, uncle, with Jesus by my side." Then in a quieter tone he said, as if meant for his uncle's ear alone, "I wanted to preach about Jesus, if I had grown to be a man; but now I must learn to feel, 'Thy will be done.'"

Poor boy! He was preaching as much by his death as by his life. And perhaps the work which his death was about to accomplish would not have been done so well by his life, however holy and devoted he might have been.

"Papa, mamma, auntie—all of you, good-bye! Kiss me!"

They did so. As they bent together over him, watching the mute agony, and the fluttering struggle which the death-grapple always brings, the pale lips had just power to frame one sentence more—

"It is better to be with Christ in heaven, than to be rich or great on earth."

This was the last lesson which fell from the lips of this little one of the kingdom, on earth.

As they looked on, the eyes grew fixed, the fluttering ceased, and the mouth dropped, for the spirit had returned to God who gave it. While they said with tears, "the lad is dead," angels sang, "a soul is born."

Mr. Huntingdon paced his own room like a man possessed, most of that night, mourning in bitterness for his first-born and only son. He had fastened himself in, so that no one should see or interrupt his grief, and it was not until morning dawned that he grew calm enough to lie down. As for his wife, it was as much as Ada and Ormond could do to comfort her. She mourned in anguish, such as only mothers feel. The blow had struck home most powerfully. God's remedies are always most decisive and sharp; and a blow had been struck at the worldliness of this household which would not easily, if ever, be forgotten. Frank's short life of fourteen years had already borne fruit, but it was to bring forth a richer, fuller harvest yet. He was another of Ormond's "garnered sheaves," and by his means other sheaves would yet be gathered for the Master in time to come.

CHAPTER XLIII.

SERVING CHRIST ON BOARD SHIP.

" Briars beset our every path,
Which call for patient care ;
There is a cross in every lot,
A constant need for prayer ;
But lowly hearts that lean on Thee
Are happy everywhere.

" In service which Thy love appoints,
There are no bonds for me ;
My secret heart is taught the truth
Which makes thy children free—
That a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty."—WARING.

"RELIGION doesn't walk in silver slippers, sir, on board ship. If you want to have your tea salted, your tobacco stolen, your hammock cut down slily, just as you've got to sleep, and no end of awkward tricks played upon you, you must take up a Christian profession."

"I suppose so. But a man would come out all the nobler, as a Christian, for passing through the ordeal."

"Indeed he would, or he would be worth but little. The process would be a very trying one, but it would strip him of all hypocrisy in no time. I have seen hypocrites driven off the field in no time, while good men and true have stood bolder than ever."

Herbert Wilson, whom our readers will remember as the runaway lad of some years before, was at home on leave of absence. He had sailed to different parts of the world, sometimes in one vessel and sometimes in another. He had seen service on the West Indian coast, the African coast, and off Gibraltar, beside flitting about here and there

other Mediterranean stations, so that his skin was bronzed and his frame hardy with exposure. As you looked at the ice, full of robust health, and marked the merry glance of the eye, you could see that though the boy was changed into a man, yet his disposition remained very much the same. Religion had never made Herbert Wilson a sour misanthrope, nor caused him to despise a cheerful tone and

heartily laugh at sinful devices savouring only of guilt and condemnation. Yet he could be grave, when it was needful that he should be so. Had you watched him when instructing his juniors on board, fulfilling a responsible task, or sitting busy at his work, amid a motley assemblage of men, where very often the mere mention of sacred things was all that was needed to provoke volleys of jests, sarcasms, and sneers, you would have seen his face wearing a quiet, determined look of well-founded, sober gravity. He had seen death threatening himself or his messmates a hundred times. Storms, bursting of guns, errands of danger on the heaving, boisterous ocean, when only a few inches of wood had interposed between them and death; and even the usual duties connected with going aloft, had, on various occasions, been the means of hurrying some who had rejoiced in their health and vigour into an untimely grave. And on such occasions, those who had ranked among the loudest fair-weather boasters, had turned the palest and trembled the most at the icy breath of the king of terrors. It was true there were some few on board who were Christians like himself, and who revered the same truths that he did, but they were only here and there—as the flock of the kingdom of heaven seems to be upon earth. But, nevertheless, the seed which Ormond Lee had sown, in the years of Herbert's thoughtless boyhood, had sprung up and taken firm root, although, as it once seemed, in most unpromising

soil. And now that the sturdy, lithe, man-of-war's man had come home for a short reunion with his friends and relatives, he was not to be found, as too many of his class are, in the resorts of the dissipated and the vicious, but at the "Sailors' Bethel," and such-like places, where the name of Christ is known and honoured. He and Ormond were even now on their way, in the closing hours of a beautiful summer day, to spend an hour at the evening service of the "Bethel."

The building stood on a narrow part of the quay, immediately fronting the water. There, were moored vessels from all parts of the world, undergoing the processes of loading or unloading, while the seamen went through their duties with the customary monotonous refrain which they generally use when at this kind of labour. Custom-house officials, excise-officers, pilots, captains, intending passengers, and sightseers, stood about on different parts of the quay, intent on their especial business. Some few, however, of the old salts, along with a dozen or two of seamen who were off duty, interspersed here and there with a leisurely landsman, whom curiosity or inclination had led that way, were going towards the "Bethel," which displayed a flag from one of the upper windows, as a signal that service was about to be held there. Beside the sailors, for whom the service was specially intended, some half-score of old women, whose husbands and sons had probably all been connected with the sea, and who were *habitués* of the place, passed into their customary seats, and quietly sat down. In the wake of these, Ormond and Herbert followed, the scene being doubly interesting to Ormond, from the fact that he had never entered the place before. A prayer-meeting was to be held that evening, as was the custom on week-evenings, and a very old man, whose white locks told of perhaps

eighty summers, commenced by giving out a favourite hymn—

“Jesus, at Thy command,
I launch into the deep.”

This was sung half through with heartiness and zeal, and then followed a prayer; then a chapter was read, and the remainder of the hymn sung, which singing was followed by a second prayer. The leader then intimated that a space of twenty minutes would be available for any friend who would wish to speak a few words to the sailors present, and sitting down he gave the opportunity for doing so. For a few minutes nobody moved, and it seemed as if the offer were to pass unimproved; when, after what seemed to be a struggle with himself, Herbert Wilson rose to his feet. Standing where he was, he said:—

“Dear friends, I am not accustomed to public speaking, and indeed have never spoken in public, except once or twice on board ship to my own messmates, so that it is somewhat of an undertaking with me to get up here. I beg you, therefore, to overlook all my unreadiness and mistakes, while I try to say a word or two for the cause of the Saviour whom we all love, I trust.

“I am a man-of-war’s man. Seven years ago I ran away from home and joined the navy; and since then I’ve been knocking about here and there in different parts of the world. At the time I first went, I did not know anything about Jesus with the heart—only with the hearing of the ear. Before I ran away I had as good a Sunday-school teacher as ever taught in a school, and he told me faithfully the truth as it was in Jesus. But I was a wild, wayward lad, and cared but little then for those things, though afterwards, when banished as it were from home

and friends, I was glad to recall his instructions to my mind. Friends, you know the general life of men on board ship; it is not very favourable for a Christian life, but when the Spirit led me, I found God there. I had no secret place for prayer, but I found that I could lift up my heart to God when up aloft, or lying in my hammock, or anywhere where I could be alone for a moment. For a long time I could not see my way clearly to Jesus; it seemed to me that it was such hard work to be saved. If I could have *done* something to win forgiveness, it seemed as if it would have been so much easier; and so I floundered on in the miserable shifting sands of unbelief, getting very often out of my bearings, and sometimes wondering if I should ever reach a secure anchorage after all. But one day when I was beating about, almost losing hope, a word from the Book came to me, just like a bright beacon-light shines out, amid the darkness, guiding the storm-tossed marines to a place of safety. It was this—‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.’ ‘Well,’ I thought to myself, ‘I do believe; I will believe, by the help of God;’ and I can scarcely tell you how, but certain I am that a new kind of peace stole into my soul,—a peace which I could never have imagined had I not felt it. It seemed as if, after being tossed about at the mercy of every wind and wave of temptation and doubt, I had at last got safely anchored in some quiet, peaceful harbour of rest. I tell you, friends, there’s no peace like that which Jesus gives! It’s something deep and abiding; never mind what outside troubles or worries come afterward, this peace cannot be driven away. It is something secure between a man and his God—a something which makes him not afraid of death, judgment, or eternity, and isn’t that worth having? Well, of course, it was not all smooth sailing on board ship after I found Jesus. My

mates, when they found it out, began to tease and mock thinking, by this means, to laugh religion out of me. it wouldn't do. I was determined by God's help *not* to laugh out of it. Then they tried petty persecution; you who are sailors know what a miserable life a man be led when he's on board ship, shut up with the same panions for long weary months. There's no getting away, andsmen can, and choosing other associates; you must and stand it, or submit to be conquered. I cannot tell nor is it worth my while to recount all the annoyances I suffered; but I may say that on more than one or occasions I was subjected to the mortification of seeing work interfered with to such a degree that I was visited with punishment. By means not my own I was compelled to appear guilty of neglect of rules, and punished accordingly, and, at the same time, no man on board was more careful of orders than I was. Other tricks were played upon me such as spoiling my food, robbing me of my repose, and taking my clothes, but I knew it was no use to complain, I quietly tried to *endure*. Well, after a time the men began to conclude that they might as well leave me alone; I think a feeling sprung up among them that it was hardly worth trying to tease and annoy one man because of his religious opinions. Mind you, there were a few among them who believed as I did, and when opportunity offered, though they were not in my mess, they would speak an encouraging word to me. But one day one of my messmates—a fine young fellow of nineteen—was taken ill with a deadly disease. We were lying off Port Royal, in Jamaica, the heat was terrible. He very quickly got worse, and, after only two or three days had passed, we knew that Bob must die. He was only conscious at times, and it was during one of these periods of consciousness that I

ventured to tell him of his danger. I shall never forget the poor fellow's despairing anguish when the news was broken to him. 'Oh! Wilson,' said he; 'must I die? I am not fit! What shall I do?' I pointed him to the Lamb of God, read to him, and prayed with him, as long as he could bear it. All our fellows were afraid to come near him—he was in such despair; but they did my duties, so that I could remain with him, and point him to the only Saviour. It was soon over with him; but I hope and trust that he found Jesus before he died. Still, it was terrible to be with him, during those hot, stifling hours in the close, dim cabin, and he protesting that he '*could not, dare not, die.*' If he were saved, it was like the dying thief, at the last hour; but I cannot say: we must not limit the Holy One of Israel. After that, however, I was let alone; my religion was no longer made a subject for sport or malice, for they began to see that it was something which would stand the test of dying. And better still, in after-days the men would listen sometimes while I read to them, or quietly receive a whispered word of advice and caution. I can truly say that religion will do everywhere: on sea or on land, in sickness or in health, in war-time or in peace, religion is best. In almost every case it will be found that the bravest sailors are the religious ones, and I doubt not but that many of you will bear me out in this assertion. Thank you for listening to a stranger for so long; and as I sit down, may I express the hope that we shall all be found at the last, safely moored in the haven of eternal rest."

As Herbert Wilson sat down, a murmured chorus of "Bless God," and "Amen," went up from the delighted listeners. Full often had some of them been in perils on the deep; they had known what sickness, storms, threatening death, and shipwrecks had meant, and they could

urse the young sailor's opinion, that whether on land or religion was best. And as they passed out at the conclusion of the service, more than one or two took the opportunity of shaking Herbert heartily by the hand, and wishing "God-speed in his Christian career in Her Majesty's r."

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE HIGH TOR.

"I stood upon the hills, when heaven's wide arch
Was glorious with the sun's returning march,
The clouds were far beneath me; bathed in light
They gathered midway round the wooded height,
And in the beauteous glory shone,
Like hosts in battle overthrown.
And, rocking on the cliff, was left
The dark pine blasted, bare, and cleft,
The veil of cloud was lifted, and below
Glowed the rich valley and the river's flow.

"If thou art worn and hard beset
With sorrows that thou wouldst forget,
If thou wouldst read a lesson that will keep
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills! No tears
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears."—LONGFELLOW.

enthusiastic and cheerful party, made up largely of the members of the Lee family, were spending a week or two among the hills and dales of Derbyshire. Ormond and two of his sisters, beside a younger brother, Mr. and Mrs. Huntingdon, Edward Telford, and two or three college friends, made up the party. They had decided on spending this way part of the last few weeks of Ormond's residence in England. He would then bid the home of his youth

farewell for some years, if not for ever; indeed, very shortly two removals were appointed to take place from Mr. Lee's household, for within another month, and before Ormond's departure, Ada was to give her hand to her beloved. Beside this, Mrs. Huntingdon really needed a change. For weeks she had almost lived in her son's sick-room, and sorrow for his loss had told fearfully both on her frame, and that of her husband. Under the circumstances it occurred to them all that an excursion for a week or two into some quiet health-resort, would be the very best thing for both physical and mental benefit, and one of the most striking and picturesque parts of Derbyshire was chosen. Once decided upon, it was not many days before the whole party were prosecuting their journey to this most beautiful part of England.

And it is a beautiful spot,—this part of Derbyshire of which I write. Woods, hills, valleys, rivers, crags, and precipices vie with each other in making the landscape lovely. The "Tors," as the Derbyshire folk call the peaks, which rise in sublimity, towering above all else, as if disdaining to belong to this lower earth; the slopes and sides of the hills, covered with forest trees; the deep, winding valleys, where the purple shadows come and go all the live-long day; the bare, craggy rocks, assuming all manner of fantastic forms; and dark, silent streams, rolling along in quiet beauty, reflecting in their clear depths the face of the sky, all combine to make up a scene unsurpassed, save, perhaps, in some parts of Devonshire, or Switzerland itself. For this part of Derbyshire is known among tourists as "the Switzerland of England," and few who go there, either for recreation or health, can tear themselves away without regret. Ormond and his friends revelled in the beauties of the spot; young hearts and high spirits combined

made them insensible to fatigue, and the rambles which they took often extended over several miles. Only Mrs. Huntingdon failed in the matter of strength, but even she was desirous of accompanying them in their proposed expedition to the top of the "High Tor." It was, from the point at which they proposed to make the ascent, rather perilous, and certain to be fatiguing, but as it could be seen from the windows of their hotel, Mrs. Huntingdon expressed a strong desire to make one of the party, and nothing that Ormond could say availed to shake her determination.

"Well, then, come along, Alice," said he, finding his persuasions futile. "I will help you up, only if your strength gives out, don't say that I didn't warn you. But it is no trifle to climb some four or five hundred feet, I assure you, and the ascent is somewhat steep from the side at which we shall make it."

"Never mind; I shall be happier with you even if I am more fatigued. When I am alone, I brood and brood over Frank's death until it seems to me as if I should lose my reason. And as to my strength, why it will come slowly back, if I make the best use of what I have. Beside which, I am certain Mr. Huntingdon would prefer that I should go."

"Of course he would," said Ada, who had come in to see what was detaining Ormond. "But see, if we don't start at once the sun will be too high for us. The heat promises to be something intense by-and-by, and Roger wishes us to get up to the top, so as to find a sheltered place in which to rest and take luncheon during the heat of the day."

Roger was the old man whom they employed on sundry occasions as guide. He had taken charge of the catables for the luncheon, sending them forward by a sure-footed donkey and a lad, on a more circuitous and level route.

So off they started, Ormond and old Roger leading the way, and Mrs. Huntingdon, leaning on her husband's arm, following. Behind them came the juniors of the party, and last of all were Ada and Edward, busy in lovers' gossip. The path wound up, first to the right and then to the left, but always up, in and out among clumps of firs, scraggy, stunted oaks, and bushes of various kinds and sizes, in the most romantic manner, while at every step a fuller and wider view of the enchanting scenery could be obtained. Presently, while they rested, a shrill whistle announced the approach of the train; and as it neared the Tor, on the level ground beneath, it slackened its pace for a moment or two, and then disappeared suddenly in a tunnel cut through the heart of the rock. It seemed like fairy work, for you had no sooner begun to wonder where it had gone, than it reappeared, rumbling and crashing, on the opposite side of the crags, darting forward like a thing of life to its destination; while the rooks and jackdaws which nestled in the woods, on the overhanging heights, cawed and crowed in remonstrance against this invasion of their domain.

Up the excursionists pressed, one after another, taking brief halts by the way, and calling out to each other as some new beauty revealed itself. The monotonous bustle, and smoke, and noise of Liverpool, in which most of the party had passed their lives, had not destroyed their perceptions of the beautiful and the sublime in nature, but had rather quickened them, and they drank in with eager eyes the beauty of the spot.

"Look here!" called out Ormond, as he pointed to a chasm in the side of the hill; "that reminds me of a cave in one of the American forests, where I with two or three wounded soldiers once passed a night. I had met with them going to the rear, and having lost their way we were all compelled

to go into the cave, damp and dark as it was, and bivouac for the night. See, here is a squirrel!"

"And here is another! Look! he has darted off to that elm-tree!"

"Yes, I see. He has a fine scope for his climbing powers here, I should say. Indeed, a little more of the squirrel's special gift would not come amiss to us. Suppose we call another halt for a few minutes."

"With all my heart," responded Mr. Huntingdon, "for Alice is quite exhausted. I feel I shall never get her to the top;" and it looked doubtful, for her weary frame was fast giving out.

The place where they halted—at least, one half of the party, for the more daring spirits had gone on, eager to reach the top—was a small grassy plateau, some few yards square, a little to the right of the ascent. They were two-thirds of the way up now; and even Mrs. Huntingdon caught the infection of the scene, for, after only a few minutes' pause, she declared her ability to start again. So, on and on they toiled, until the very top was reached, and, with loud hurrahs from the collegians, the whole party stood around the flagstaff which crowned the summit of the Tor. Here the view was magnificent; and while Roger and the servants attended to the luncheon, the whole party looked about in admiration. The summit was pretty flat for the space of several yards, and sloped down gradually on the one side to a plain, while on the other it terminated abruptly in a precipice. This precipice was wooded to the top; indeed, the edge of it, together with the topmost foliage, was within eight or ten feet of the flagstaff. On the lower part of this flagstaff were carved the names of scores of adventurous climbers, and out came the pocket-knives of the juniors to accomplish the same feat. One

after another, the gentlemen carved their names, and the ladies their initials, until it came to Edward's turn. Taking the knife he cut his name, and that of Ada underneath, and then stepped back to obtain a better view of his performance. Step by step he retreated backward, nobody thinking of the danger that was so imminent.

"Leaning rather to one side, Telford," remarked one of the party. "Your initials are terribly awkward."

"I think not. It is you who are standing on one side. Come where I am and you will be able to judge better." As Telford spoke he stepped still further backward, and the whole party being in a knot in front of him, round the flagstaff, were not in a position to notice his peril, until a scream and a crash awoke the surrounding echoes. They all looked round in horror, but Edward had disappeared over the verge of the precipice.

"Great Heaven, he is gone!" exclaimed Ormond, and, darting forward, he peered down the abyss. At the bottom of the ravine the river flowed along, deep and clear, while, as I have said, up the side of the precipice, trees, bushes, and underwood united to form a hanging forest. Down—down, though this mass of wood Edward Telford was crashing, bruised, and battered, most likely senseless; and unless some strong branch arrested his descent, and held him firmly in mid-air, he would go down, and down, right into the bed of the river. Death, in one form or another, seemed inevitable.

"Edward! Edward! where are you? Can you take hold?" Ormond shouted with all his might, but no answering voice was heard. Mrs. Huntingdon had sunk to the ground in a deathlike faint, and Ada was bending over her, more dead than alive, while all the others looked scared and frightened. Only a little while before, the

affianced couple had been talking of marriage, and dreaming sweet dreams of the home which should be theirs. Beside which, he had been invited to take charge of a growing and influential church, and he was anticipating the time with eagerness. Was it all to end in a premature grave?

"Roger, what shall we do? What can be done for him? You know best." And white lips turned to the old guide, who had come up, hearing the outcry. "Can we save him, do you think?"

"I don't know. Unless the good Lord above has mercy on him, it's little we can do. May be now he's lying white and stiff under the water. My word! but there's a poor chance for him there!"

"No; I'm sure he isn't," rejoined Ormond. "I believe him to be caught somewhere in the descent by the branch of a tree. There is a boat or two on the river—see! And if he had fallen in, the rowers must have seen and heard it."

"So they would, Mr. Lee. Well, it's just possible that he might have been caught in one of the trees; and they are thickest just here. The best thing you can do is for the ladies to remain in charge of the one who has fainted. Or, stay; go a little further away, where it will be safer." And he pointed to the sloping part of the Tor. "Then all you gentleman follow me down as quickly as you can. When we are down we can gain help. I know two or three fellows who are good climbers, and if the young gentleman is to be found they will find him. You can do nothing but watch and wait. Meanwhile we must warn these boats to remain on the look-out in case he should drop. But every chance is against him. I've known many accidents about here, at different times, but I never knew anybody to come up alive after falling off the High Tor."

CHAPTER XLV.

THE RESCUE.

"Man is immortal, till his work is done."

"It's over with him, depend upon it." "He'll never come up alive again." "Bruised and battered to death by this time."

Such were the ominous murmurs among the motley group which had hastily gathered together at the summons for help, at the foot of the High Tor. Men, tough and brawny with exposure to the weather, and accustomed to the hills and peaks in all conditions, gravely shook their heads, as they considered how to save him. First and foremost, there was the impossibility of knowing where he was. Somewhere in that hanging forest, suspended midway between heaven and earth, he was still, but no signal either of sight or sound could be given to guide the explorers. Had this been possible, the task would have been comparatively easy. Good climbers were there, daring and strong, and, above all, willing to make the search; but how to begin was the problem. Roger was appealed to for his opinion.

"Well, sir," said he, as Ormond looked anxiously round to hear what he would say, "if I might suggest anything, it should be this. You know the exact spot that he fell from; well, suppose the best of these climbers be let down from there with a stout rope round his body, and the other end of it firmly fastened at the top. Then, when he has found the young gentleman, he should take hold of him well round the waist, and we, with our united strength, will

pull them up. Mark Tebbutt, you're the best climber in this part of the country; can't you do this?"

"My word! Yes, and worse than that! If you'll only keep firm hold of the rope at the top, I'll go anywhere or do anything. But mind, if you let go, you'll kill me and the young gent too."

"We won't let go," said Ormond. "And it would be as well to engage the boats to remain near the bottom on the river, in case he should fall from your grasp into the water."

"Oh! yes, sir, that could be done; but if Mark Tebbutt once gets hold of him, he's not the chap to let him go, provided you other men keep a firm grip of the rope above."

Mark Tebbutt was a slim, active man, lithe as a greyhound, and not unlike a squirrel in his capacity for climbing. He had been born and bred in a mountainous district, and had spent some time, in his youth, in the wild Orkney Isles, where he had gained a livelihood by taking the eggs of the wild fowl from their nests in the clefts of the rock. On this account his feats of daring in this line were only regarded by himself as very commonplace; and with reference to the task which lay before him, he felt very little hesitation, seeing that many a time he had been in much more perilous positions, with the waves of the mighty ocean dashing and foaming on the breakers below him, and his only footing a ledge of slippery rock.

"Now then for the trial," urged Ormond, fearful that every minute would endanger his friend's life—if, indeed, he were not already lifeless. "Have you ropes long enough for the work?"

"Yes," replied Mark Tebbutt. "I'm never without good strong ropes, and here are one or two of my best. I'm ready as soon as you please."

"Come, then," returned Ormond, and leaving the boats watching near the bottom of the Tor, they reascended the peak. The next thing was to make the rope secure to some tree at the summit, which was soon done, and Mark Tebbutt descended with the other end tied in a slip noose round his waist. In a minute or two he disappeared among the foliage, and the watchers drew back from the ledge where they had seen him go off, waiting for the summons which should announce the finding of the lost. The ladies had come up, and the whole group stood round listening in suspense for Mark Tebbutt's voice. At such times moments seem hours. Ada was weeping bitterly, and Mrs. Huntingdon was almost prostrate; their pallid faces told but too truly how heavily the stroke would fall, should their worst fears be confirmed. Presently, however, a cry awoke the echoes.

"Ahoy, there!"

"What is it?" said Roger and Ormond, both answering at once.

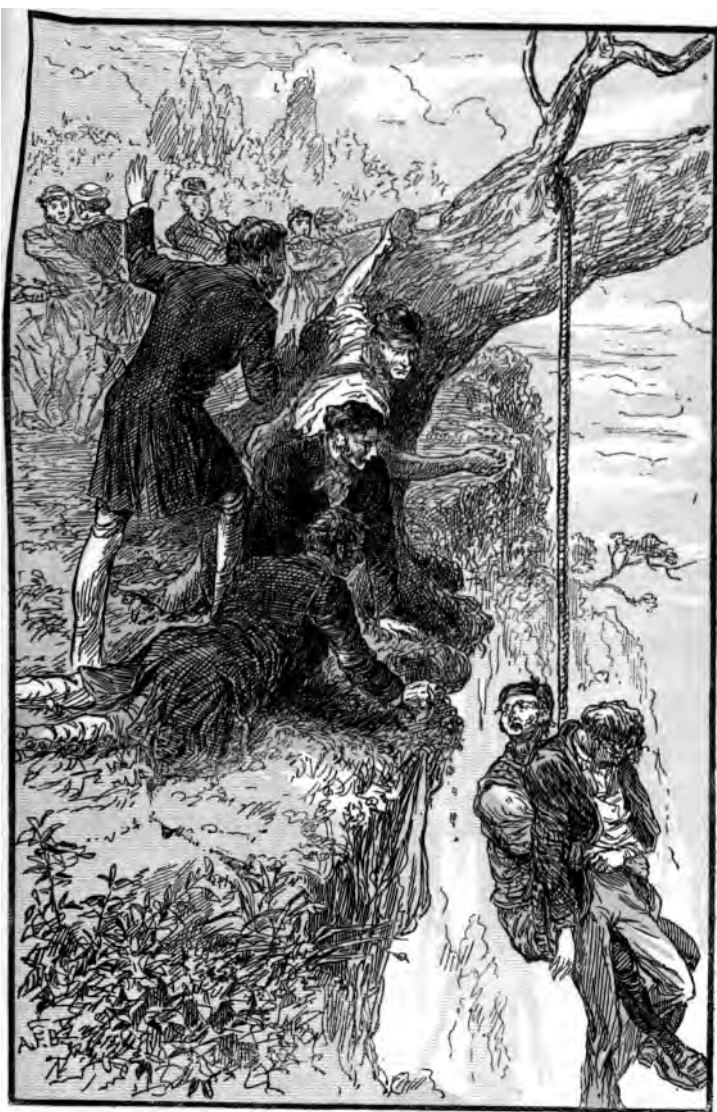
"I've got him! He's not far down; caught across a tree."

"Is he alive?"

"Yes, I think! wait till I call again, and then pull me up!" Then there was hope of his life! They each breathed more freely, but the suspense, until he should be brought up, was terrible.

"Ready! Lift me slowly!"

Away the men pulled, each one working willingly and therefore well, while, little by little, the brave mountaineer came to the top, bearing his unconscious burden. As he rose to sight, two or three of the party, who were not pulling at the rope, crept on their hands and knees to the edge of the cliff, and assisted Mark Tebbutt, taking the insensible form



"I'VE GOT HIM."—"IS HE ALIVE?"

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of Edward Telford from him, and, bringing him back to a safe place, laid him on the grass.

Ada pressed forward and took his head, but there was no answering sign of life. Telford's face was white as marble, and to the closest observer it was difficult to decide the question as to whether he slept the sleep of death or not.

"What do you think, Ormond?" said Mr. Huntingdon. "Is he alive?"

"I think so. There is a slight pulse, but in all probability he has met with a severe blow in the head during his descent, which has rendered him insensible. We had better bathe his face with water, and administer a little stimulant, if possible, and then take him to the hotel, where we can obtain medical assistance." Just then somebody suggested the donkey-trap as the best means of conveyance down.

"The very thing, sir, in my opinion," said Roger. "And we could make up a bed for the gentleman with the ladies' shawls and things, so that he shouldn't feel the jolting a bit."

"By all means," returned Ormond. "And the route, though more circuitous, is more level, so that beside the benefit to Edward, the ladies can easily follow."

No sooner said than done. Lifting the prostrate form with careful hands, the young men of the party conveyed Edward to the humble conveyance. On the way one of them stumbled a little, laying his hand on Edward's chest to recover his balance, and a smothered moan burst forth, showing unmistakably that life was not extinct. As Ormond heard it he turned to Ada and whispered, "Cheer up; he lives." But the reaction was almost more than she could bear, and it was as much as she could do to control the disposition to faintness which crept over her. That one word,

"*He lives*," had turned the whole current of her fears, and had given birth to sweet hope again.

It appeared from Mark Tebbutt's account that Edward was suspended across the trunks of two gnarled oak-trees, just where they interlaced with each other. It was possible that he had received a blow on the head in falling, Mark thought, but he felt sure that he had experienced some internal injury in the region of the ribs. While securing him to the rope, so as to bring him up safely, he had found that although insensible, he had once or twice faintly moaned as he had pressed his chest.

"In what position did you find him suspended?" said Ormond.

"Lying flat on his chest across the trunks of the trees. His head and legs were hanging down. My word for it, there's something amiss the matter there. But if he comes off with life, it will be better than being killed, though maimed he may be. I've known many a strong young fellow, too daring and venturesome for his good, who has lost his life in a minute or two. I can remember one at Cheddar, who ventured too near the edge of the cliffs to look over, and was dead before he reached the bottom. And in the Orkneys, several of my mates lost their lives through being too venturesome."

"Yes, but Mr. Telford's fault was not an excess of daring. He was quite unaware of his danger, and in stepping back to look at something, he fell backward off the cliff."

"He did, sir? Then he must have had a double blow. The first, you may depend on it, he got on his head or back, and then being pitched forward he fell on his chest across those trees. And a good thing too, for his senses were too much knocked out of him by the time he got there to have saved himself."

As soon as possible the party returned to the hotel, and within five minutes, experienced medical aid was on the spot. They put Edward to bed, and then made a prolonged medical examination. It turned out that the mountaineer's fears were correct; four ribs were broken, and the system had sustained a severe shock. This was all the heavier for him because of his naturally delicate constitution; and on account of his devotion to study, he had grown frailer lately, instead of stronger. It was sad to see him stretched on his bed, still unconscious, and resembling nothing so much as a corpse. During those anxious hours the one question which trembled on everybody's lips, was, "*Will he live?*"

* * * * *

For many days Edward lingered between life and death, and the physician gravely shook his head as he came and went. It was necessary that the sufferer should be kept perfectly still, so the quietest chamber in the hotel was secured for him; and his college friends, having no heart for amusement now, went back to their work again. Mr. Huntingdon and the juniors of the Lee family went back to Liverpool, also, as soon as a favourable change took place, leaving Edward in charge of Ada, Ormond, and Mrs. Huntingdon—three most devoted nurses. Mrs. Huntingdon had learned tenderness and dexterity in her dead son's sick-room, and instead of being the pleasure-seeking frivolous woman of the world which she had been of old, she now understood that life has higher enjoyments and better resources than she had ever before dreamed of. It is a great thing when the soul is thus awakened, be it accomplished by what means it may; and it is an unspeakable blessing when God permits the awakening to take place in life, not in death—in time, not in eternity. Mrs. Huntingdon was a nobler, truer woman, by

so much the more as she had learned the great mysteries of God's kingdom—mysteries which He hides from the wise and prudent, and reveals unto babes.

And Ada knew now, as she bent in loving service over the insensible form of Telford, how dear he was to her. No one knows how intense the tie of affection is, until sickness, separation, or death tells them. She felt that she *must* pray for his life, and many times she caught herself echoing the Saviour's words, "If Thou wilt, let this cup pass from me."

She had anticipated spending many happy years with him in loving service for the Master's cause—how could she endure that upon this bright picture the deep, dark shadow of death should fall? At such times she could almost pray for death too.

CHAPTER XLVI.

AN OFFICE TALK.

"The quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the plain beneath; it is twice blessed;
It bleaseth him that gives and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mighty. It becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown.
Therefore, consider this,
That in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy,
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy."—SHAKESPEARE.

"WHY, Charlie! it's never you!"

"Me, and no other. Am I changed so much that you don't know me? or is it that you are afraid of recognizing a gaol-bird?"

"Don't speak so bitterly, Charlie. The only reason that I didn't speak before was because I didn't know you. I little dreamt, as I passed to and fro through the office, that you were my old companion, or I would gladly have spoken."

"I knew you then, almost at first sight. We saw too much of each other in the old times to be strangers now. Do you remember that garret where I was so long in hiding, George?"

"I do. I've never forgotten, and what is more, I'm unlikely ever to forget it. The many journeys I made to and fro, with help to you while you were in hiding, burned themselves deeply into my memory. And that last night, when we were arrested, comes back more forcibly to my memory than all the rest."

"So it does to me, because I was so near escape that I felt *certain*, and then all at once I found myself an inmate of a felon's cell. That time was the darkest page in my history. Nothing will ever blot it out."

"Unless," put in George, "you emigrate to another land, and there commence a new career."

"The very thing I am anxious to do. I am waiting here now to speak to Mr. Ormond. How soon will he be in?"

The two speakers were Charlie Hobbs and George Smyth, respecting whom, as our readers will doubtless remember, we gave a former account by no means flattering. After Charlie's committal to prison, George, as will be remembered, applied to Ormond, and gained admission, by his influence, into Mr. Lee's office. At first, as was imperatively necessary, he only filled a menial office, but as time tested his integrity, and proved his honesty, Mr. Lee gradually advanced him into favour. During Ormond's absence in America, George had remained the same willing, active, careful lad, and scrupulous to a nicety in all money matters. He had never been particularly quick; indeed, the nickname of his old school-days still clung to him,—"*Tortoise*;" but he was perfectly reliable, and old Mr. Lee soon found that out. At the time of which I speak, he was holding a responsible position as entering-clerk; and it was in the exercise of these duties that he had been busily passing to and fro during the time that Charlie Hobbs was waiting for Ormond. Charlie was almost, if not quite, broken down in spirit by the experience through which he had passed. The "*apples of Sodom*" had been glittering to the eye but nauseous to the taste, and when he saw one and another of his old school-fellows filling situations of honour and trust, and reflected upon what he too might have been, he was ready to gnash

his teeth at his own past dreadful infatuation. He had pondered over the advice given him by Ormond the last time he called, and had decided on emigrating to Australia. He had now called to state his decision, having been prevented from doing so before by Ormond's absence in Derbyshire. Of course everything depended on his telling his old teacher, seeing that no one else could furnish him with the necessary funds. In his humiliation, he fancied that everybody whom he knew, who neglected to speak, despised him, even though, perhaps, they never recognized or thought of him; and under the influence of this bitter feeling he made himself known to George Smyth, upbraiding him too, in some sort, for giving him the "cold shoulder," as he termed it. We must not blame the poor fellow too harshly for this. Men who are down in the world have often this Ishmaelitish sort of feeling about them. They fancy that every man's hand is against them, as their hand is certainly against every man.

"Mr. Ormond will be in soon, in all probability," said George, in answer to the last question. "He has been out for an hour, so that we are expecting him back almost immediately. What part of the world, may I ask, do you intend to go to?"

"Australia."

"Australia? Do you prefer that to Canada?"

"Yes, much. I am not so likely to meet with people that I know in Australia, as I should be in a colony nearer home. Beside which, I am not particularly anxious what I do, once I get out there—whether it be gold-mining, or sheep-keeping, or cattle-farming. I've made up my mind to turn over an honest leaf, and the further I get away from old England the better for me."

"Yes; I can understand that from merely looking back on

my own experience. And—forgive the question—but how are you off for funds?”

“Well, you will guess that, when I tell you that I have been living on my parents ever since my release. And they can’t do much to help me—they certainly could not give me more than a third of the sum I require. And now I have told you this, you will, perhaps, judge what my errand is here this morning. The plain fact is, I *cannot* go out to Australia unless I am befriended by some good Samaritan.”

“Let me do something towards it then, Charlie,” replied George, “if only for the sake of those old miserable times when I tried to help you and couldn’t. If a ten-pound note is of any service to you, you are very welcome to it. I took my salary yesterday, and can spare that.”

“Thank you, oh thank you, George,” replied Charlie, as he turned away his face to hide his emotion. “How can I take it from you after my bitter words just now? I am ashamed of myself, indeed I am.”

“Say nothing about it, old fellow,” said George. “Here is the note, and when you think of me, remember that I wish to be a real friend to you. After you go out I should like to hear from you sometimes; and whenever you do write to me, you may always depend on receiving an answer.”

“You are a good Samaritan indeed,” said Charlie. “If you only knew—but you can’t—the misery and the degradation which are my portion, you would feel ten thousand times more pity for me than you do. I feel as if I should never get over it.”

“But in a new country there will be new hopes, new companions, new associations, and new ties. Here, all your past misery is forced painfully upon your recollection—too painfully, I think; for sometimes when you are fancying

that others are thinking of it, the idea has never entered their brains. They may not even recognize you. It was the case with me just now, you see, when I didn't so much as know you were here. In Australia all that will be changed; you will feel free, and more at liberty than ever."

"I had need to be; here I am as miserable as it is possible to be. I could creep into a nut-shell to avoid seeing anybody."

Was this the once gay, volatile, jolly, company-loving Charlie Hobbs? Was this the end of his drinking, smoking, betting, saloon-visiting career? Yes. And not of his alone, but of tens of thousands who pursue the same paths. His miserable shame and degradation of soul was only a punishment which he bore in common with all who sin and suffer as he did. And I think it may be accepted as a general rule, that if a youth sins against light and knowledge, his punishment is proportionately heavy. His conscience is also more tender, and on this account he feels shame more acutely than would one steeped to the neck in ignorance and vice. All the time Charlie was sinning with such a reckless hand he knew he was wrong, but the lad went on and on, until he had gone too far to retrace his steps, and Nemesis overtook him at last, in the shape of a prison. This portion of his history would for ever remain a source of sorrow and shame to him; at every possible opportunity his sins would start up before him and embitter his remaining years.

It is not to be wondered at that George Smyth showed mercy to his old companion, seeing that he had learned in the best of all schools—the school of Christ. The kind and generous treatment which he had received in Mr. Lee's office had brought out all the noble traits in his own character, and had made him a good specimen of manly honesty and uprightness. I have told before, how he had succeeded in

business, and beyond all this, he had tried to do good in different departments of the Lord's vineyard. Having experienced the benefit resulting from wise and kind instruction, himself, he was now, in his measure, trying to reproduce the same benefit to others. The "Tortoise" had won in the race of life, at last.

Ormond was as good as his word with Charlie Hobbs. Seeing, as he did, that nothing could avail him so much as a new footing in another country, he very generously made up the remainder of the required sum, and sent him off. It was with very few expressions of regret that Charlie bade farewell to England. He was glad to get away, and the only pang connected with leaving, was the recollection that perhaps he might never be permitted to see his parents again. They were old and infirm; indeed, their son's misdeeds had whitened their locks and bent their forms as only a child's misdeeds can do. They had sorrowed bitterly over their boy, and all the more because they had tried so hard to bring him up respectably and honourably. The five years which Charlie had spent in prison had been as ten years of age and infirmity; and, in all human probability, the farewell that Charlie spoke as they saw him from the dock in the outward-bound vessel, was the last they would live to hear from his lips. They returned to their home with very mingled feelings: sorrow, that their son had so disappointed them in the past; and thankfulness, that yet another chance was offered him for the future.

I may as well add—for I shall not return to Charlie Hobbs again in the course of this narrative—that he *did* prosper in his Australian career. Made wiser and sadder by experience, he had discovered that it was possible to buy pleasure at too costly a price. At the Antipodes, he found, too, that upright dealing answered best, as well as in Eng-

and, and in proportion as he practised it he succeeded. From time to time, after his settlement there, Ormond heard cheering accounts of him, proving that though for a long time the seed of the kingdom had lain dormant, it had at last taken root in his heart also.

CHAPTER XLVII.

CONSECRATION OF LIFE.

"I waste no more in idle dreams my life, my soul, away,
I wake to know my better self—I wake to watch and pray.
Thought, feeling, time, on idols vain, I've lavished all too long,
Henceforth to holier purposes I give myself, my song."

WARD TELFORD did live. After some weary weeks of lingering, and other weary weeks of lingering in the doubtful border-land between sickness and health, he was able to turn to his studies. It was not much longer that he would be to remain in the university,—indeed, he would shortly be for ordination, prior to entering on his new sphere of labour,—and he was anxious to regain as far as might be the ground he had lost during his illness. Mrs. Huntingdon and Ada returned with him to Liverpool, whence he took his departure for Cambridge. They had remained in Derbyshire with him during the whole course of his illness, and Mr. Huntingdon had gone to and fro each week. Mrs. Huntingdon had learned much by the trial, if no one else had. Her son's death had thrown her into such a distressed and morbid state of mind, previous to this extension, that she was not many degrees from despair. In

addition to her loss as a mother, she had become conscious of her deep poverty of soul. Her intense need of comfort had revealed to her the mighty distance which existed between her and the Great Comforter; and like a captive in prison, she yearned for that divine sympathy and compassion which alone could satisfy the cravings of her nature. Do you wonder that she did not find consolation in her former chosen associations and companionships? The reason was that she had sounded the depths of worldliness and fashion, as far as it was possible for such a woman to do, and had found these resources to be but "broken cisterns," utterly incapable of furnishing comfort to her soul; and when tossed by doubt, tortured by unbelief, lacerated by bereavement, and chastened by trial, the soul must have something stronger, sweeter, and more enduring than any comfort the world can supply. Mrs. Huntingdon was beginning, though dimly, to comprehend that the Rock of Ages could be her "shield and fortress,"—her "strong tower,"—her "shadow in a very weary land." And when ministering by Edward's bedside she grew slowly into sympathy with his religion, so that after a brief space she could freely unbosom herself to him, and he taught her the way to Jesus. In return for the bodily healing which he experienced as one result of her careful nursing, he preached unto her Christ, the Great Physician, and she, with all the sickness and sadness of her storm-tossed spirit, closed with the offered love of that Saviour who had hitherto been to her, destitute of both "form and comeliness." Not that she leaped all at once into the security and peace of the Christian's faith. It would not have been possible for her, with her active mind and restless nature, so little accustomed to the childlike trustfulness of which Jesus speaks as being indispensable to an entrance into His kingdom. For many weeks she was

tossed about on the waves of doubt, unbelief, and fear, and it was only when almost despairing that she found the haven. Then, in her new-found joy, she could take as her own, Bonar's beautiful lines—

"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad.
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad."

It was not long after their return to Liverpool that Mrs. Huntingdon became the possessor of this new joy and comfort. Then she felt that she could look forward to reunion with her son, whenever the course of her earthly pilgrimage should be over. But, as might have been expected, she met with difficulties, in which her faith and sincerity were amply tested; and as she ventured, though with timid steps, into various departments of Christian labour, she became more and more conscious of the fact that she had adopted what was considered an unusual course. Prior to Frank's death she had moved in a numerous circle of people who were as worldly-minded as herself. On her return from Derbyshire she was beset with old acquaintances, anxious to express their sympathy with her, and eager to welcome her back into the gay society which she had formerly graced. This trial she had dreaded; and especially when it became whispered about that "Mrs. Huntingdon had taken up with religious people," did she fear the inevitable rupture which would be made with the old associations. But all her dread did not avert it, and at last it came.

One morning Mrs. Huntingdon was sitting busy at work, making a garment for a poor aged woman to whom Ada had introduced her, when the servant announced Lady Colville. Laying down the unaccustomed work, Mrs.

Huntingdon advanced rather tremblingly to meet her visitor. Lady Colville was anxious to obtain Mrs. Huntingdon's presence at her forthcoming ball, and had sent a card of invitation some two or three days previously. To this, however, Mrs. Huntingdon had returned a polite and kind note, begging to be excused.

After the usual salutations were exchanged, Lady Colville advanced to the subject in hand, and with a quick intuition Mrs. Huntingdon divined what was coming. She had dreaded this visit, knowing the old lady's dictatorial and fussy disposition.

"My dear Mrs. Huntingdon, how changed you look! I was prepared to find you depressed, as I had heard so much about it from others. You sit alone too much, I fear!"

"No, I think not." But her eyes filled with tears, and her face looked very white compared with her deep mourning. "I have not got over the trial yet, nor do I think that I ever shall thoroughly. Frank was such a dear boy; I cannot forget him."

"You need not forget him, but you should go into society more. While remembering the dead we must not sacrifice the living. Believe me, Mrs. Huntingdon, if you were to mix more with your old friends, you would be a different woman."

"I think not, Lady Colville. Indeed, I don't think that would comfort me in the least."

"Do you not? Why, what crotchet have you got into your head? Excuse me, my dear, but I speak for your good."

"I feel sure of that. But I don't think I could go into society as much as I once did."

Her ladyship knit her brows.

"Mrs. Mowbray was telling me the other day that you

had taken up with religion, and that you did not go into society now. But I didn't believe it, and now I have come on purpose to ask you to favour me with your company at our house next week."

Mrs. Huntingdon remained silent, and Lady Colville went on.

"Come, now, say you will come. I really think it will do you good. I cannot accept your refusal, and so you must give me your promise to come. I have called on purpose to get it. My dear child, you mope too much and ponder too much over things that only injure you. Now, put away all that and come out again as you used to do. Why, you know you were one of the queens of our circle, and we can't allow you to slip away like this."

Mrs. Huntingdon looked worried and distressed, but she was not to be seduced from her confidence. "My dear Lady Colville, I feel your kindness most acutely, and I know you mean my good; but believe me, I cannot come."

"Why not, may I ask?"

Now came the tug of war. Mrs. Huntingdon blushed violently, and then turned very pale. It is a cross for a young and weak believer to confess the newly-found faith.

"Because, since Frank's death, I have gone to Jesus for that comfort which I could not get anywhere else."

Lady Colville looked as if she scarcely understood the reply. Then she said, rather tartly, "But that does not require you to break off old friendships, does it?"

The very self-same question that the Tempter had suggested time and again. And Mrs. Huntingdon had at first supposed that she could keep on the old terms with her former acquaintances, until growing light convinced her of the impossibility of ever mixing up worldly amusements with a religious profession. Not one of these old friends either

understood or cared for religion. Morally respectable, they lived unto themselves, and for themselves, following the gaieties and frivolities of this world to the utmost extreme. Such an atmosphere was not at all fitted for piety to flourish in. But now that the matter was put to her decision, point-blank, Mrs. Huntingdon was very perplexed. Could she have done so, she would have avoided this clashing of opinions, though not for one moment desirous of denying her faith. For a moment or two she paused, and then, clear and bell-like came the voice of conscience, repeating solemn words, "Whoso shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." This was enough. Her courage rose again.

"Lady Colville, I love and repect you as an old friend, and shall ever regard you as one, but lately I have tasted of purer pleasures than all my former pursuits afforded. My darling's death has brought me *life*—spiritual life. For a long time I was buried in sorrowful despair over him, although I felt sure that he had gone to be with Jesus whom he so loved; until somehow—I can scarcely tell how—I was led to that same Jesus for consolation. There I found it, and there I still find it. The barrier was not, however, broken down all at once; this could not be. For some weeks, during my absence from Liverpool, I was passing through a severe struggle in mind, for I could not bring myself to submit to the gospel. But at last the Spirit of God enabled me to do so, and I found peace. Yes, Lady Colville, I, whom you think so disconsolate and despairing, have at last found *peace*. Now, do you think that I can go back to the hollow joys of balls, theatres, and other fashionable dissipations? As well may you ask me to stifle the

light of the sun, and be guided by a rushlight! Let me think of you as a friend, I beseech you, but don't urge me to engage in things which I cannot enjoy."

"Well," returned Lady Colville, "I must confess that I was not prepared for this high-flown sentimentality. I flatter myself that I am as good as other people, and I am certain that I shall never endure the restrictions which it seems you have voluntarily imposed upon yourself. I was told that you had turned your back upon us all, but I did not believe it. I scarcely know what to say now, however. It must be so, I think, since you profess yourself unable to accept an old friend's invitation on the score of conscience. But I hope that, as your sorrow wears off, these fancies will wear off too. Under the circumstances I must make an allowance for you."

Mrs. Huntingdon said but little in reply. It seemed to her that she could not bear much argument just then. But she felt determined to keep firm to the faith which had blessed her so much.

After a few commonplaces Lady Colville departed, telling Mrs. Huntingdon that she should not give up the expectation of seeing her. There was something really warm-hearted about the old lady, and that made it the harder for Mrs. Huntingdon to deny; but under any circumstances she felt that she must make a firm stand against the flowing tide of worldliness which would inevitably have borne her from her refuge. She felt that she *could not* be allied to the world, and still keep her faith.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

MEMORIES OF THE DEPARTED.

LADY COLVILLE'S departure left Mrs. Huntingdon in such a perturbed state of mind, that she could do nothing but lay aside her work and go out into the open air, to seek in active exercise to eradicate the unpleasant feelings produced by her visitor. As she walked she pondered, questioning within herself whether or no she had done right. "Taking up the cross,"—was this it? or was she making needless crosses for herself? She had never before been placed in such an equivocal position, for she had always gone with the stream; and, as the proverb says, "A dead fish can swim with the stream, but it takes a living one to swim against it." She was finding out that her new course of life needed more steadfastness of soul and more singleness of purpose than had ever yet been manifested by her. Not that she repented it—you must not imagine this for one moment—Mrs. Huntingdon never once sighed or wished for her old pleasures, because she had experienced how much sweeter and purer her new ones had proved to be. In this mood she walked quickly on until she arrived at the corner of Anchor-lane, when she bethought herself of poor sick Molly Patterson and her miserable home.

Threading her steps carefully over the sloppy stones, and the accumulation of rubbish which, from time immemorial, had distinguished the entrances to the dirty houses situated in this unsavoury locality, she reached Molly's in time to see one or two of the children sobbing as if their hearts would break. The younger ones, being unable to understand

the why and wherefore of the sorrow manifested by their elders, were looking on with silent interest; and back in the corner, half hidden by a long curtain, was a man leaning over a bed sobbing at intervals, bitterly. This was George Patterson, a coal-heaver; but, rough, uncivilized man that he was, he felt the impending death of his wife most acutely. After a few whispered words of information from the eldest girl, Mrs. Huntingdon went forward to the bed, and there she saw Molly gasping and panting for breath. The poor woman turned round with that piercing, appealing look which one only sees on the faces of dying people, as if they would fain entreat relief from the onlookers. Her husband was mutely holding her hand, feeling, poor fellow, that all the light and comfort of his home, such as it was, was dying out with his wife. Though he had behaved badly to her at times, often beating and ill-using her when under the influence of drink, he still clung to her in a rough, clumsy sort of way; and if there had been nothing else to remind him of the pressing need of a wife and mother, the presence of his four children would have done so. The eldest was a lad of twelve or so, and the youngest was an infant of a year, the others ranging between these ages. Molly had been ailing for many months; step by step she had wearily toiled her way almost down to the grave, knowing but little cessation from pain, and none at all from labour and anxiety, until she really sank too low for anything. Ada Lee had known her well for some time, and had often succoured her by such kindness as her immediate necessities required. It was in consequence of this that Mrs. Huntingdon had become acquainted with her, and for the past month or more, her kindness had been also unremitting. It seemed providential that she had come in just now, and inwardly she thanked Lady Colville for being the unconscious means

of sending her there. Taking her hand, as George made way for her, Mrs. Huntingdon whispered, "Molly, I fear you are worse!"

"Yes,—yes,—dying, I know," and Molly looked so pitifully towards the poor miserable children who stood huddled together in a group, watching the scene, that her visitor's sympathetic tears came without stint. Her own motherly affections had been rendered doubly acute since Frank's death, and on this account she could understand the dying woman's feelings.

"Let me give you a little of this wine," and taking up a small bottleful which had been furnished by Ada, Mrs. Huntingdon moistened the lips of the dying woman. She was worn almost to a skeleton, and her breath came and went with irregular throes, making it painful to stand by her. Any attempt to swallow the wine would certainly have led to suffocation.

"Thank you," she gasped, "but it is my children that I think about. What *will* they do when I am gone? Oh! George, do be kind to them, for my sake, do."

"Don't you trouble, mother," sobbed out George. "I'll do all I can for them; but you'll be better yet."

"And I will do whatever lies in my power for them," said Mrs. Huntingdon. "Any kindness which I can possibly show them I will."

"Thank you, ma'am, thank you. And please—tell Miss Ada that her teaching of me has done good. Tell her that I should not know what to do now, if it wasn't for her."

"And what are you doing, now that you are come to die?"

"*Leaning on Jesus.* My life hasn't been much of it—full of trial and sorrow. But now I am going to the 'Palace Beautiful,' which Miss Ada reads to me about."

Ada had read through, at times, the whole of the beautiful dream of Bunyan, to Molly's great delight, and no small edification. It was easy to detect that memories of it were floating in her mind. Mrs. Huntingdon had read it too, in her girlhood, and now followed up the train of thought as well as she could, by saying, "And are you afraid, now that you are walking through the Valley of the Shadow of Death?"

"No, not a bit. I can see the Celestial City, almost."

George Patterson looked and listened with a stunned, stupid sort of feeling, and when Molly said that she could see the Celestial City, he stared around him, as if wondering whether the vision were present to his bodily eyes. Into his low, grovelling life no gleam of heavenly beauty had ever stolen, and he was as careless of the higher existence beyond, as anyone in Liverpool. Poor Molly had only been awakened a little time previously, to the life of the world to come; and it was only since drawing near to death that she had grown into faith and hope. The *Pilgrim's Progress* had helped her into this, so that it was but natural that she should think and speak, in view of death, in the language of that marvellous allegory. But it was all an unknown language to her husband.

"The shining ones are coming down to the river! Look!"

The watchers saw nothing. It was only the dull eye of the bodily sense being dimmed, and the eye of the soul being opened.

"And the bells of the city are ringing! Listen!"

As Molly spoke she lifted her fingers, as if to enjoin silence, but in one moment the features grew fixed, the silver cord was loosed, the golden bowl broken, and the "spirit returned to God who gave it." George Patterson

looked on, frightened and awe-stricken, until he realized the fact that his wife was really gone, and then he burst into a bitter cry, in which he was very speedily joined by the children.

Mrs. Huntingdon scarcely knew what to do. She had come out that morning seeking to wear off her own perplexities and burdens, and quite unwittingly she had walked into the deeper ones of other people. And it was providential that she had done so, for neither Patterson nor his children seemed to have the slightest idea of what was to be done. Mrs. Huntingdon considered for a few moments, and then going to the next tenement, where resided a steady old woman, she asked her to perform the last office for the dead. Then leaving some money with Patterson for the immediate wants of the family, and advising him to seek assistance, in the matter of burial, from the parish authorities, she wended her way home, telling the eldest boy to accompany her.

While Mrs. Huntingdon sat there she remembered that all Frank's clothes had been carefully put away at his death, out of respect to his memory; and no hireling hands had ever meddled with those precious garments since that time. Now, as she looked at the tatterdemalion appearance of Molly's eldest child, it struck her that, could Frank know of it, he would approve of her giving some of his apparel to the lad. He was tall and stout of his age, so that Frank's clothes would fit him, and with the lesson which death had just put before her, it seemed to her that giving some of the unused garments to this boy would be honouring Frank's memory better far than by laying them up where moth and dust could corrupt. So she took him home, and as she re-entered her stately mansion, the obsequious footman started to see that his once haughty mistress could demean

herself so much as to be seen in company with such a ragged little Arab.

Sending Dick Patterson into the kitchen regions, there to regale himself with a good meal of bread and meat, Mrs. Huntingdon sought her own dressing-room. Her husband was not at home, so that she had to decide and act upon her own responsibility. He, too, looked upon Frank's things as sacred property, and by common consent they had been carefully put away in his wife's dressing-room. Dick Patterson was in such a pitiable plight that he needed everything, from a cap, right down to shoes and stockings, to replace the ragged apologies for clothing which he wore; and Mrs. Huntingdon bethought herself that a suit of Frank's black clothes would be just fitted for mourning for his mother. With chastened feelings and quivering lips she found out the key, and unlocked the deep drawer, where, one by one, they were folded away. There were his gloves, caps, jackets, and everything, lying quietly and neatly, fit emblems of that rest which their former wearer was now enjoying. How the very cut and shape of the clothes brought back to her mind the ways and sayings of her son! As she stood and lingered near the drawer, taking up first one thing and then another, hesitating within herself as to which to give away and which to retain, the hot tears came and rained thickly upon them. It seemed almost like sacrilege to touch a garment belonging to the dead; and then, as the bitter signification of the word—*dead*—came back with fresh force to her mind, the old rebellion of soul rose up, and refused to be conquered. Why was her only child, her one darling, taken? Why was he not spared to grow up by her side? Oh! the bitterness of having to live through all the weary years of life, childless,—seeing others blessed with healthy, happy children! There was Dick

Patterson, strong, healthy, and hardy; so were all his brothers and sisters; while Frank must ail and die! And this thought unnerved her so much, that she sank down on her knees, in front of the drawer, sobbing out her utter desolation. What that desolation was my pen refuses to describe; but oh! mother, if you have buried a darling little one, you will understand what I mean. When you have lighted on some childish relic of the dead form, or peeped quietly and tearfully at the little shoes which lie hidden so snugly in your secret drawer, you have felt all the memories of the past surging up wildly and bitterly, overwhelming your poor bereaved heart with remembrances of the one who "*is not.*" A mother must go through such an experience before she can sympathize with Mrs. Huntingdon.

Mr. Huntingdon found his wife sobbing out her grief by her dead son's clothes, and gently lifting her from the floor listened to her story. With saddest kindness he entered into her feelings, and made up a parcel with his own hands for ragged Dick Patterson. Then he locked the drawer again, and comforted his wife as best he could, though, poor man, the scene was almost too much for him. Frank Huntingdon had been the idol of that house, and He who will "utterly abolish" the idols of the soul, as well as of the nations, had laid his hand upon it.

CHAPTER XLIX.

HOW TWO MAY WALK TOGETHER.

It is a fine Sabbath morning in Glasgow. The people are going along the streets in quiet well-ordered fashion, wending their several ways to this and that place of worship. We will follow the stream, and turn in thither—into a fine, lofty church, which is being rapidly filled with eager, devout worshippers.

As we take our seats we notice that the minister is ascending his pulpit, attended by a veteran, gray-haired pew-opener, who closes the pulpit door behind the young divine with an air of devout tenderness and love, as if the occupant of that pulpit surpassed all others in the ministerial ranks. And this reverential tenderness is all the more remarkable, seeing that the minister is young in years—very young for such a charge—so that to the superficial observer he seems insufficient for his post. But wait until he speaks. With slow and solemn mien he goes through the preliminary devotional exercises, not as mere preludes to his own display of oratorical talent, but as part and parcel of God's worship; and then, in a sonorous, flexible voice, announces his text. As he proceeds, discoursing largely and lovingly of the freeness and fulness of the mercy provided in Christ Jesus for every soul of man, you learn the secret of his marvellous power over his people. By illustration, by simile, by argument, by entreaty, by persuasion, he pleads with his hearers to surrender themselves as living sacrifices to the Master. That vast assemblage is swayed as one man under the power of his message; and, as they go quietly

and thoughtfully to their homes, the people feel that they have indeed been listening to the words of a master-mind.

Do you ask me who this eloquent young servant of God is? Edward Telford. As quickly as possible after his accident, he entered on his much-loved work with deeper love and a more ardent zeal because of the fact that he had been so nigh the grave. And he was not three months in his new position, before the love and esteem of the people manifested themselves in an ardent desire that he should settle down among them for many long years of usefulness, should his life be spared. Then, and not till then, he offered his home to the one for whom he had watched and waited so long a time.

And Ada had looked forward to this period with trembling tenderness. As yet, Mr. Lee had said very little on the subject, though it was well understood that no wedding would take place without his assistance with reference to pecuniary matters. Edward was rich in all mental qualities; gifts of both head and heart were his in abundance; but of what the world calls wealth, he owned a moderate amount only. His aunt's legacy had only sufficed to carry him through the university, and settle him comfortably in Glasgow. His house was not very large or grand, but in keeping with his simple habits. Prior to the wedding, however, Mr. Lee had taken it on himself to run up to Glasgow, to see for himself what was really wanting there, and his verdict as he came away, was decidedly in favour of a large additional outlay. Beside this outlay, which he kindly took upon himself, he settled a handsome dower upon Ada, thus removing the fear of all pecuniary embarrassment. Mr. Lee was not the man to talk much; he had said very little during the course of Ada's engagement, but he had watched every step most narrowly, revealing to no one how much Edward had

gained his respect; testifying it only when the time came, in the most handsome manner. And all that her father could do for the man of her choice was not one whit too much for Ada. She thought, as she thanked her papa, that there was not the like of Edward Telford in the three kingdoms—in which blissful belief she is doubtless joined by all affianced brides.

But before bidding the labours of her youth farewell, Ada went to all her old acquaintances, and had one last sweet chat with them. Among them were poor old childless Mrs. Blake, who wept as if her heart would break at hearing of Ada's coming departure—for ever since Hugh's death, Ada had been her best friend—and Herbert Wilson's mother. In consequence of different influences, Mrs. Wilson had become more civilized and quiet than of yore, and her husband had grown, as one result, more attached to his home. It was well that this was so, for in time past the tendency of Sam Wilson's frequent matrimonial scoldings and domestic tempests had been to drive him towards the alehouse. He had fast been degenerating into a frequenter of the "public," when Mrs. Wilson listened to wise counsels, and set about trying to make her home more attractive than before. Besides this, Herbert's running off to sea had softened her considerably, and her fear of the younger ones treading in his footsteps had made her more considerate and motherly towards them. But it was a hard task at first, for the fact was that Esther Wilson had married from a respectable place of service, where she had never known what want of either work, money, or comforts had meant. When her rather improvident marriage had suddenly made her acquainted with all these, her temper got soured, and her patience exhausted, very prematurely. As the result Sam and the children felt at times extremely uncomfortable. It will be

remembered that the visit which Ormond had paid to their home in Exton's Court, revealed a sad story of domestic muddle and discomfort.

But, as I have intimated, Esther Wilson had learned that even for her there existed "a more excellent way," and after many failures she tried to walk in it. Sam would often marvel when a blunder or an accident of the children's was passed by quietly, instead of leading to passionate words and hasty blows; but with quiet wisdom he would only puff away more rapidly at his pipe, contemplating, meanwhile, the orderly fireside which greeted his return from work. Ada and Mrs. Wilson had become well acquainted, and it was not without a sharp pang of regret that the poor woman learned of her young visitor's approaching departure.

"And so you are really going away?—up to that Scotch city?" said she, as she took in Ada's information.

"Yes! Glasgow will, I suppose, be my future home."

"Well, Miss Lee, all I can say is that I hope you'll be blessed as much as you deserve to be. And as to your husband that is to be, I don't know much about him, but I think as how he's a nice young fellow; and my Sam says so too, for when he called here that time with you, and talked so sensibly about one thing and another, he got quite took with him. You'd travel many a mile before you'd meet with the like of him."

"I am glad you think so. Some of my friends didn't think so once."

"Perhaps they thought, miss, if I may make so bold, that you ought to wait until you could get somebody richer."

"Well, perhaps so," replied Ada. "However, I didn't quite fall in with that view."

"No, I should think not, Miss Lee. One may go through

the forest, as I've heard 'em say in my young days, and pick up a crooked stick at last. And this reminds me that matrimony sometimes brings to light some very crooked tempers. Young men—and young women too, for that matter—can be fair enough and smooth enough before marriage, but sometimes terribly queer after. I've a been through it all, you know."

"And so you can speak from experience. And now, supposing Mr. Telford should turn out a crooked temper, how would you have me deal with him?" Ada's eyes sparkled with latent mischief. She knew Edward Telford too well to suppose that his singularly mild, disciplined temperament would ever turn out anything to be afraid of; but Esther Wilson had a racy way of expressing everyday truths, which had great attractions for her, and she was anxious to hear her opinions on matrimonial felicity.

"I was a crooked temper myself, Miss Lee, when I was first married; aye, and for many a long year after. Indeed, I've only myself to blame for Herbert's running away to sea, and I've much to be thankful for that it turned out as well as it did. It's no good to be snappish and fretful at home, whether it's with husband or children; it won't do; and if they can't be quiet at their own firesides, they will run off elsewhere. But you asked me how to deal with a crooked tempered husband. Well, I can't say as I can speak from experience there, because my Sam never troubled me much that way; it was more on my part that the crookedness lay. However, I'll say this for him, that let him be cross, or tired, or tipsy, or what not, he'd always sit quiet, and answer me nothing, go on as much as I would at him. Many's the time I've talked and bothered till I got ashamed of myself, seeing Sam sit so still, taking it all, and answering nothing. It would have suited me a great deal better

if he had answered me, and bothered away too; but he wouldn't do it. And so I've come to the conclusion that the best way to deal with crooked tempers is just to let 'em alone, and then they'll come straight again in good time. Only it's rather hard to do this when hard words and provoking things are said."

"So I should think. There would exist a large need for forbearance then, I should imagine."

"There would, indeed," said Mrs. Wilson, who, with all her deficiencies, possessed a great deal of native good sense and shrewdness. "In married life we must bear and forbear; nothing else will do. If we don't do that, Miss Lee, it's like pulling two opposite ways, and no couple will ever get on like that. I and my Sam found out that before it was too late, I'm happy to say; and it's only fair to tell you that you've had a good share in bringing about the change."

"I, Mrs. Wilson?"

"Yes, Miss Lee. You haven't come here so many times in vain, and now you've been good enough to take advice which is really the fruit of your own work, and I must certainly beg your pardon for being so bold."

"Oh, never mind that," laughingly replied Ada. "I shall not fail to recall your advice to memory if ever occasion arises."

A week thereafter Ada and Edward entered into the bonds of holy matrimony. Mr. Lee gave his daughter away, but it was with some regret, for he knew what a bright beam of sunshine his home would lack. Ormond was there as "best man," and four smiling bridesmaids to attend the bride, beside a large party of guests. After the wedding breakfast was over, the pair started for a short tour in Switzerland and Italy, amid a perfect shower of old slippers. And certainly if good wishes were of any avail, the future

life of Edward and Ada Telford promised to be one blaze of sunshine. But I think that no life—whether married or single—can be this. Sunshine and shadow are blended all the way through, so that we may neither be blinded by prosperity nor crushed by adversity.

CHAPTER L.

FIRE AT SEA.

"How seldom we dream of the mariners' graves,
Far down by the coral strand;
How little we think of the winds and waves,
When all we love are on land.
The hurricane comes, and the hurricane goes,
And little the heed that we take,
Though the tree may snap as the tempest blows,
And the walls of our homestead shake.
But the north-east gale tells a different tale,
With a voice of fearful sound,
When a loved one is under a close-reefed sail,
On the deck of an 'outward-bound.'"—ELIZA COOK.

IN the quiet of his own room, on the evening preceding his departure, Ormond sat looking over Nellie Greenwood's letters. Dainty little missives they were, written on all kinds of tinted paper, and in the tiniest, neatest style you ever saw. They amounted now to a pretty fair number, seeing that the receiver of them had been at home for some months, and a constant correspondence had been maintained. As he lingered lovingly over them, he congratulated himself that it would not be very long before he should see the writer herself. Nellie had grown daily more and more dear to him since quitting America; so strong had the tie grown, that

he eagerly anticipated his return. But there was sorrow among his friends and acquaintances at the idea of losing him. George Smyth, Harry Gilfillan, and Edward Telford would all have retained him if they could, but it was not to be. All preliminaries were settled, and Ormond had agreed to take the New York branch of the business, and to start in the new world as partner with his father. Of course his marriage with Nellie Greenwood would speedily follow, and then it was his intention to offer Pastor Greenwood a home with them. It was a question whether the gray-haired old minister would forsake the quiet little village in New England, where he had spent so many years in faithful labour, to reside in New York; but he was devotedly attached to his only child, and the strength of that tie might perchance draw him there. Old Mr. Lee had at first objected to the scheme, but as Ormond urged it more earnestly he grew to regard it with favour. Certainly, by sparing his eldest son to take the foreign branch of the business, there would be gained the advantage of bringing his younger sons into the home branch, and so the name of the firm might grow in time to be that of "Lee Brothers," instead of the present designation, "Lee and Son."

Beside all this, Ormond felt convinced that his work in England was done. His sojourn in America, during the civil war, had loosened the ties which bound him to the old country and his Sunday-school labours; and further, his boys—the boys who had so long owned him as their especial instructor—had gone out to fill their own places in life. He had not been allowed to labour in vain; he had returned, "bringing his sheaves with him" in some instances, although in others they had been garnered early. Frank Huntingdon and Hugh Blake had passed to the "many mansions," and some of the others were decidedly on the way thither.

George Smyth was endeavouring to live the Christian life with conscientious earnestness; Edward Telford was an accredited servant of God, doing good service in the gospel harvest-field; and so also was Ernest Osborne, in the new and promising fields of labour in the Southern States, which the war had opened up. Harry Gilfillan had advanced in his profession until he was, although young, master of a large and important school in one of the midland manufacturing towns, and better still, an earnest, outspoken Christian. Beside the day-school, he taught a large class of youths each evening, and his training, which aimed both at the discipline of head and heart, was going far toward making these rough Staffordshire lads noble and true-hearted. Ormond had not laboured in vain in England; now he was bent on repeating those efforts in America. This might not have been had not Nellie Greenwood been there; but the providence which "directeth a man's steps" had doubtless pointed out this course. At anyrate it was now too late to be recalled, for within another twenty-four hours he would be on board the *Golden Star*.

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"Good-bye, my son, and may God bless you," said Mr. Lee, as he wrung Ormond's hand. A group stood upon the landing-stage to see him off, consisting of his parents, brothers, and sisters. All were there but Ada, who was of course with her husband in Switzerland. Mrs. Lee clung to Ormond with a keenness of anguish which could not be disguised. Mothers generally feel a special tenderness for their eldest born; and in this case her boy had proved himself such a noble character, that all the household had been indirectly the better for him. His past faithfulness to duty, his unshaken firmness in the face of difficulty or sneers, and his unvarying Christian deportment, had been all so many

bonds to knit him to their hearts; and when they remembered that now the parting would be permanent, and possibly for life, the Lees, one and all, realized how dear their much-ridiculed brother had been. It was as much as he could do to bid them all farewell, and to tear himself away. But the signal was given, and with a parting blessing, Ormond stepped off into the launch, which was waiting to convey him to the steamer. And as long as they could see each other the waving handkerchiefs spoke silently, but eloquently, the heartfelt benison with which he departed.

The vessel was towed down the river that evening into the Channel, where the winds were blowing the waves mountains high. Happily the moon was shining, and this circumstance enabled the passengers to bear the rough weather more calmly than they would otherwise have done. Sea-sickness prevailed, but that was a customary thing, and the sailors went to and fro among the groups of sick passengers as if sea-sickness were an everyday occurrence.

Twenty-four hours later they had got down good part of the Channel, having bidden good-bye to Queenstown, where their company was increased by some three or four hundred steerage passengers, who did not forget to make the second night vocal with their hideous outcries. But "Westward-ho!" was the chief thought of all, and now, unless some vessel should speak them on the passage, they would be completely isolated from all living creatures until their arrival at their destination. Ormond spent a good deal of each night upon deck; the confined air of the cabin was disagreeable to him, and he was far from being a good sailor. From his post of observation he had watched the receding hills of the Welsh coast and then of the Irish coast, and, when finally the last glimpse was gone, he felt that he had indeed left home for ever.

It is a solemn thing to be upon the sea. "They that go down into deep waters" see more of God's majesty than we do upon the land. The hurricane, the lightning, the roar of the waves, the subtle dangers of the rocks, the swiftly eddying whirlpool, and the frowning tempest—all teach most powerfully what insignificant units men are compared with the mighty deep. Tossed about like a feather on the foaming billow, what vessel would be safe were it not for the untiring Providence overhead which "wings an angel, guides a sparrow?" Ormond realized this most forcibly; but, as he turned in to rest on the third night, he little anticipated what fearful danger was at that moment awaiting them.

Some time towards the morning, he could not say what hour, he was awakened by a piercing cry of "Fire! fire!" which rang through the ship from stem to stern. Turning out of his berth, and making for the cabin-door in the semi-darkness, he was met as he opened it by a thick volume of smoke, which caused him to retreat for a moment. Then recovering himself, he threw on some articles of clothing, and fastened a life-preserver round his waist. Next, going up on deck, he tried, amid the alarm and confusion that reigned triumphant, to ascertain the actual amount of danger which existed. Below deck, the flames raged furiously, and tongues of fire and wreaths of smoke made their way out wherever a crevice was to be found, while the steps and ladders were thronged with bewildered passengers. The captain and mates were firm and calm amid the dreadful scene, and in tones of thunder sent the sailors here and there, trying their very best to stay the progress of the flames. Incessantly was water poured from the pumps, until it seemed as if the steerage—for it was there the fire had broken out—would be perfectly flooded; but no abatement in the fury of the flames could

be detected. Then, trembling, frightened men, and feeble women lifted up their voices and cried, "Help! help!" as if there were any to help or to save on that wide ocean. It was just possible that another vessel might be sailing near enough to render aid, or that the glare of the burning ship, when the flames reached the deck, would act as a beacon, summoning help from passing vessels; but these chances were all too terrible to be made the foundation of much hope. A little longer the men battled with the flames, but, perceiving the utter uselessness of such a course, one by one they returned to the captain's side, looking the despair they felt.

On the upper deck, wherever standing room could be found, were crowded hundreds of terrified passengers. Ormond looked around him, and noted the silent agony visible on each face, for the flames had now burst above the deck at one side, and every face carried its own tale of horror. On one side of him was a mother clasping two little ones in her arms, and weeping over them with silent prayer. On the other side, was a wife, frantically clinging to her husband, beseeching him to save her, and he in his turn offering hundreds of pounds to be taken to a place of safety. Young men and young women stood there, paralysed in the presence of death; and they shuddered as they looked over into the dark abyss of waters, because of the doom which lurked there, and which was only one degree less fearful than that which threatened them in the raging, crackling flames. Some one caught hold of his arm with a trembling, fearful grasp, as if *he* could help, and said, "Oh, sir! is there any hope for us?"

Turning round, Ormond saw that this was a poor woman, one of the steerage passengers, whom he had befriended the day before in a difficulty with some of the other passen-

gers. She was a poor labourer's wife, going out to join her husband, who had gone before her to Canada. But, as matters at present stood, it seemed more likely that her rest was to be beneath the salt sea wave.

"I can't say. There seems no hope but in God."

Instantly the woman dropped on her knees on the deck, and commenced praying in the most agonizing manner. Men and women, old and young, joined her, and amid the plash of the waters, the dull lap of the flames, and the black volumes of smoke, blowing here and there, up went the deep, hoarse murmur of that imperilled company. "Lord, help us. Lord, have mercy upon us." Pale lips, which had before scoffed at prayer, now sent up the trembling petition as fervently as any.

"The boats!" shouted the captain. "Out with the boats and get in the women and children."

CHAPTER LI.

ON LAND ONCE MORE.

SOONER than my pen can trace the lines, the seamen flew to lower the boats. But not half that great company could get away in them; to the most inexperienced eye it became evident that certain destruction awaited large numbers of the passengers. And then began one of those rushes for life which are always so terrible at sea. Strong men and determined lads pushed themselves forward, jostling the weaker women and children out of the way, in the fierce

struggle for safety. But Captain Stedman took his stand resolutely by the side of the ship, and forbade any such attempt. "Save the women and children first," said he; "not a man shall leave until they are safe."

"But there *are* men in the boat," said a burly-faced stranger, pressing forward, "and what is to keep me from going too? Ain't my life as precious as theirs?"

"Only this, my man," said the captain, presenting his revolver. "I'm commander here, and the first who attempts to disobey my rules will be shot down. Without discipline no life will be saved. The sailors in the boats are there to manage them."

The man shrunk back out of reach of the revolver, vowing vengeance on the captain, but dreading to jump overboard for fear that after all he should not be picked up. One by one the women were helped off and the children handed down, and as each boat was filled, the order was given to "push off." And one could see from the darkening faces of the men that there was little chance for them. Only the two last boats were available for the male passengers; and as the fierce tongues of flame rose above the level of the deck, casting a frightfully lurid light on all the scene, one could read despair on the faces of those who were left behind. Ormond was not among the number who were in the boats; he, with the others who seemed doomed to destruction, peered out into the darkness, knowing now that their only hope lay in the chance of some friendly vessel sighting them and taking them off. The boats were out of view, returning towards the land they had so lately left, and the burning mass cast its light far athwart the gleaming billows, when suddenly the report of a gun was heard. The burning ship had attracted the attention of a passing vessel, and she was already approaching the *Golden Star* with all steam up.

I should have mentioned that long before this, Captain Stedman had ordered the powder to be cast overboard, so that as long as the ship should last, there would be a chance for life. Oh! how that terror-stricken company—doubly haunted by death, now that the boats had pushed off—hoped, and listened, and prayed for rescue; and meanwhile the *Bella* was bearing down upon them with all the speed of which she was capable. Would she reach them before it was too late? It was a race between life and death—and death, too, in its most fearful form. Ormond, brave as he was in the conviction of his heavenly Father's care, yet felt a deathly sickness steal over him as he contemplated the possibility of going to the bottom with all his bright dreams unrealized, and his life "cut short in the midst of his days," and prayed eagerly that rescue might come in time. Life is very sweet at nine-and-twenty, and, believer though he was, Ormond shrank with horror from a watery grave.

"Ahoy there!" shouted a strange voice, as the steamer came up as near as was consistent with safety. "Have you boats?"

"They are all gone," sang out Captain Stedman. "We have sent out all that we could, back to land. Can you send boats to help us off?"

"Yes," came the answer, sharp and clear, across the foaming waves. "Stand ready."

Presently, in less time almost than could be expected, although the minutes seemed hours of agony to those on the doomed vessel, the regular splash of oars announced that help was coming. Time was precious, and those who were clinging for dear life to the burning wreck only feared that the *Golden Star* would burn to the water's edge all too soon for them to make their escape good. But strong hands and willing hearts were come to the rescue, and within five

minutes the boats were resting on the water immediately below the imperilled passengers.

"Now then, my men, steady," shouted Captain Stedman. "See every passenger off first."

"Ay, ay, sir," and they guarded the approaches to the boats so skilfully that there was no pushing or crowding, but a most orderly getting off into the boats. As each boat was filled, it put out towards the *Bella*, where every man was helped into what was a veritable ark of safety. And as a watchful Providence would have it, not one was lost, but every single man of them, passengers, sailors, officers, and captain, got off safe. It cost Captain Stedman keen regrets to leave his vessel, for many times he had taken her out and home across the broad Atlantic, and many of the passengers were utterly destitute, having lost all their earthly possessions. But "all that a man hath will he give for his life," and to be taken from a burning wreck to a place of safety was too good and great a mercy to be lightly estimated. At such times people can scarcely think of gold and silver. The blessed fact of having escaped with life is so overwhelming a mercy, that all minor considerations are forgotten.

For an hour or two they watched, and saw the *Golden Star* go down. Seething and boiling like a cauldron, the waves hissed, and steamed, and roared, as she settled slowly down beneath. Then amid intense thankfulness the rescued ones began to contemplate their position. Happily the winds were now calm, so that the boatloads which had put off earlier in the night might reasonably be expected to reach land. The *Bella* was outward bound, and to America, so that those rescued by her, were doubly benefited in the opportunity to continue their journey. The only difference lay in the fact that she intended putting in at Boston

instead of New York. But this difference was rather in favour of Ormond's plans, seeing that Pastor Greenwood and his daughter lived at no great distance.

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Ormond's first act on arriving at Boston was to telegraph to his family, informing them of his danger and deliverance. Then for the first time he heard the tidings of the safe arrival on the Irish coast of the boats and passengers belonging to the *Golden Star*. Obtaining fresh funds from New York, he re-equipped himself as far as was necessary, and sent to Mr. Greenwood, announcing his arrival, and giving a few particulars of his recent rescue. They had read it all in the papers before, but they little anticipated that the recital bore such a thrilling interest for them in the fact that Ormond's life was concerned, inasmuch as he had purposely refrained from advising them of the name of the vessel, in which he intended to sail. The account of a shipwreck has no such mournful interest for us, as for those whose fathers, sons, husbands, or brothers have gone down with it. This was their experience; how must they have felt when Ormond's letter was put into their hands! Almost on the heels of his letter Ormond himself followed. He knew well what loving hearts would welcome him back from the jaws of death, and whose fervent thanksgivings would ascend to the Most High on his behalf. At the last stage, before reaching Beechville, he was startled out of a deep reverie by hearing his own name called repeatedly.

"Here!" said he rather wonderingly. "Here I am. Who wants me?"

"A gentleman and lady who have been waiting here this couple of hours," replied the landlord. "Here they come to see for themselves. Will you get out, stranger?"

At the question Ormond alighted, for he heard Mr.

Greenwood's voice, and on his first glance he saw him and his daughter advancing to meet him. They were not much changed; Nellie looked more beautiful than ever, he thought, as she lifted her veil from her blushing cheeks and murmured "God bless you." Forgetful of all the proprieties, Ormond clasped her in his arms, and, with a tremulous "Thank God," he gave her a warm passionate kiss. In that first blessed reunion what cared he that curious eyes were gazing at him, wondering what the "Britisher" meant. He only knew that he had reached the goal of his dearest hopes. Then, and not till then, he found time to greet the pastor, and to receive his warm greeting in return.

"God has been gracious to you, my son," was the old man's tremulous remark as they clasped hands.

"He has, indeed; I little expected to see land again."

"His providential mercy has been over you in six troubles—yea, in seven, for neither fire, water, nor bullets have been permitted to cut short your life. You may depend upon it that there is important work for you to do yet in His vineyard."

"I hope so, indeed," said Ormond, and he turned to request the driver of the stage to put his luggage down there. His luggage was comprised in one single portmanteau, containing necessary changes of raiment, which had been hastily procured in Boston, after replenishing his funds from New York—all his well-stocked chests of clothing, books, and other English *souvenirs* having gone to the bottom with the wreck of the *Golden Star*. Pastor Greenwood had a little car with which he had driven to meet Ormond, so as to bring him on the last stage of the journey. First seeing Nellie settled, Ormond put in his portmanteau, after which he and the old gentleman got up, and then bidding "good day" to the curious old Yankee landlord,

who had remained an interested spectator of the proceedings, they drove off. The ride home was simply delightful, for in that part of New England, in November, at the season so appropriately termed the "Indian summer," both firmament and landscape are full of glory. The trees were covered with foliage in every shade of colour, from a golden brown tint to the deepest hues of purple and red, while as for variegated forms and tints, there was no end of them. Far away rose the grand old hills, dressed in their robes of purple and crimson beauty, looking like the ethereal heights of a celestial creation, while high above all was the calm blue heaven, and away in the west the golden rays of the setting sun. And while they travelled along, Nellie and her father hung upon Ormond's lips as he recounted the fearful danger from which he had been rescued; verbal narration seeming to bring it home more closely to their hearts than any written account ever could. Ormond thought he had a foretaste of what perfect happiness meant, as he passed through the pastor's little garden, hand in hand with his darling Nellie, and remembered the recent terrors, and threatening destruction. The tumultuous feelings of his mind rose in jubilant strain, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercy." And Nellie must have thought something like it, for as she led him into the old-fashioned porch, half hidden by rose bushes and creepers, she looked up timidly and gratefully into his face, and said, "I am so happy and thankful that I can't tell you how I feel! God is so good to bring you back to me again! Shall I ever love Him, and you, enough?" For answer, Ormond pressed her to his heart.

CHAPTER LII.

A NEW ENGLAND WEDDING. CONCLUSION.

“What was it held my world-worn breast
In holy thrall, unknown before?
What was it those grey eyes expressed,
That made me worship and adore?
It was the pure and tender ray
That filled those eyes, in joy and woe,
It was the beam that could not play,
Without the fountain stream below,
It was the beam of simple Truth,
Of woman's faith, and trusting Youth.”

It was on one of those beautiful, frosty, sharp, clear, sunny autumn days, which are only to be experienced in all their delicious exhilaration in New England, that the wedding took place. And as Nellie Greenwood was in some sort a person connected with the whole village of Beechville, which owned her as part and parcel of its belongings, Beechville determined that it would do honour to the day. Parson Greenwood had not preached for twenty years and more to that unsophisticated country people, without eliciting a good deal of real, downright, honest affection. Every Sabbath they had dutifully and reverently listened to his utterances in the pulpit of the old-fashioned meeting-house, and in all the principal events of their lives had required his friendly offices, so that it was little wonder they regarded him with affection, or that this affection should spring up and well over in its outflow towards his fair young daughter. So, unknown to Nellie or her father, the people of Beechville decided to “keep up Miss Nellie's weddin'” in their own peculiar fashion.

“Thanksgiving Day” was very near at hand, and on that

day, according to national custom, the people would, one and all, deliver gifts of their farm, dairy, and forest produce at the parsonage, as a practical testimony of their gratitude for the bounteous harvest. But some of the more generous-hearted determined that the wedding-day should in some sort be the harbinger of this great annual feast, in the multiplicity of its gifts. And although some doubted whether Nellie's English husband that was to be, would enjoy the hearty New England mode of presenting these gifts, the majority decided that it should be done.

According to Transatlantic custom the wedding took place at Nellie's home. The group assembled there was not large—Parson Greenwood, who officiated, Nellie, and two of her young companions, and Ormond, with the schoolmaster of Beechville as "best man." They stood up in the "keeping-room," or parlour of the parsonage, to hear the simple exhortations and benediction of the service,—simpler, by far, than our English ritual. Three or four old friends of the family, and a couple of faithful retainers, who had served Mr. Greenwood faithfully in the positions of gardener, and housekeeper, were there beside, and, with the other onlookers, clustered round the door, and listened to the vows which these two vowed to each other. Scarcely, however, was the ceremony completed, when, as if by preconcerted signal, visitors began to pour in—uninvited visitors, too—bringing with them wedding gifts, wherewith to endow the young couple. Ormond stared, and expressed his astonishment at the unusual clatter which prevailed, having understood that but few guests were to be invited; but on Nellie's assuring him that this was only a general custom, he wisely resigned himself to his fate, consoling himself meanwhile with the reflection that his Nellie must be a very extraordinary personage to be blessed with such a multitude of friends. Some light refreshments

were being handed round, when in burst Dinah the charwoman, breathless, with some astounding intelligence. Dinah had been specially hired for the day.

"Please, sir, there isn't room to put the things. The house won't hold half, nor quarter of them."

"Why, Dinah?"

"Because the people are bringing such loads! They surely must think that the young master and his wife will want half a dozen houses furnished instead of one!"

Ormond looked his surprise, and turning to his father-in-law said, "What does Dinah mean by furnishing houses for us?"

"You are ignorant of our New England custom, I see," said Mr. Greenwood smiling; "so I will explain it to you. On any special occasion, such as this, it is customary for the friends and neighbours to invite themselves, bringing with them everything requisite both for eating and drinking; and occasionally, as they have done now, supplementing these creature comforts by presents of various kinds. I took pains to explain to our friends last week that you did not really require anything of the sort; but my people still hold to the idea that Nellie belongs to them, and would have been offended if they could not have kept up their own peculiar custom."

"Suppose then," said Ormond, "we go out and mingle with our friends, Nellie;" and he turned to his wife.

"By all means," returned she; "in fact, we shall be expected to do this."

So out they went. First, their way lay through the ordinary large living-room of the parsonage, and here they found some ten or a dozen of the neighbouring folks, absolutely laden with good things. These visitors had left their pies and joints in the large kitchen outside, round

which the housekeeper, Dinah, and the gardener, were flying in bustling importance, "fixing things" for dinner, which was to come off as soon as all the arrivals were announced. Both there, and in the living-room, were parcels of house-linen, table-linen, carpeting, blankets, curtains, rugs, ornaments, and china, while in the courtyard outside were miscellaneous loads of chairs, bedding, wood, and farm produce—enough, as Dinah had said, to furnish three or four moderate-sized dwellings.

"Good luck and good health to you, Mr. Ormond Lee," said one tall specimen of a New England farmer, as he rose up to welcome the young couple, and introduce himself and his companions to the Englishman. "I'm Deacon Phillips, and I reckon I'm about as old a friend as our pastor there can own. Some of us thought that you, bein' an Englishman, wouldn't like our customs; but, says I: 'Hold your tongues; if Mr. Ormond Lee had sense enough to choose our Miss Nellie before all the world, he wouldn't be so bigoted as to despise our New England fashions.' So Mrs. Phillips and the rest on 'em are here to wish you joy, and to help keep up your weddin', sir. This is Mrs. Phillips,"—and he pulled forward a little chubby woman who was nestling a baby up in her arms,—“and here's Seth Stubbs and his wife, and here's Deacon Wood and his daughters, and Abram Josselin and his wife, and Mark Brown and his family, and Abel Stockton, and George Rymer, and Caleb Kemp, the tithing man—but I must stop a bit, sir, or I shall frighten you off. The rest of 'em must tell you their own names, and give their own gifts.” And after this speech, which was immoderately long for Deacon Phillips, he being generally a taciturn specimen of humanity, the worthy man subsided into his chair, thinking that he, at all events, had said enough for that day.

"I'm only too delighted," said Ormond, "to receive your welcome, my friends; for though I am almost a stranger to you, yet I feel that in one short hour your hearty friendship has broken all barriers down, and has made us firm friends. Yes, I have had the good sense to choose your pastor's daughter for my darling wife, knowing that in the years to come she will be dearer than my own life. Therefore, for her sake, I bid you welcome to our wedding, and accept your gifts in the spirit with which they are given."

"Bravo!" said Caleb Kemp, and his rough, awkward features glowed with honest fervour. "Three cheers for our Miss Nellie that was, and her husband! I've cut down my best hickory wood for them, and I'm glad I have! Long years of happiness to them."

How the echoes resounded through the place! and the echoes being heard outside, they were taken up and prolonged by the hangers-on in the courtyard and garden. And when that was over, Ormond and Nellie, arm in arm, went freely round among the guests, mingling with them, shaking hands, inquiring for old acquaintances, and hearing pleasant banter, until dinner was announced. The housekeeper had laid it out in the two largest rooms of the parsonage, and from an open doorway communicating between the two, all could be seen and heard. Parson Greenwood, with Ormond and Nellie, graced the head of the table, while down the sides the visitors and friends ranged themselves as their fancy dictated. Then, when a pause occurred, up rose Mr. Greenwood, in his simple, unostentatious way: "My friends, let us ask the blessing." All standing, he offered up the accustomed petition, and then the hearty, hungry company fell to at the good things spread before them. Beechville long remembered that wedding, and in after days loved to tell of their dearly beloved pastor and "Miss Nellie,"

as well as of the "good young Englishman " she had married.

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Not to linger here, I must say that in a very little time Ormond induced Mr. Greenwood to follow them to New York, whither the married couple went after a short trip to Niagara Falls. All the portable gifts of the Beechville people were conveyed to New York, where they adorned the beautiful home of our young friends. Mr. Greenwood took up his residence there too, though not without a struggle at leaving the scene of his labours; and concluded his life's pilgrimage there, with little grandsons and granddaughters growing up around him. Ormond Lee and his wife are well known in the various walks of mercy which they frequent. Long may they be spared to do the good which their position and means enable them to do!

On the same continent Ernest Osborne is busy among the freed negroes. His work was hard and unpromising at first, but after some years of patient continuance in well-doing he is able to tell of some "garnered sheaves" also.

Returning to our own country, we find Edward Telford and Harry Gilfillan at work. Their labour is successful, because it is done in the name of the Master. Gilfillan is now also at the head of an academy for youths, and, like Arnold of Rugby, aims to make his lads "Christian gentlemen." The Rev. Edward Telford is known far and wide as a prayerful, earnest, eloquent herald of the cross. These two are perpetuating, in their lives and labours, the influence which Ormond Lee commenced and exercised in the Sabbath-school.

My last reminiscence of Herbert Wilson is somewhat sad. After continuing in the navy for some time, gaining good

conduct badges, and rising as fast as his age would permit him, he was ordered one day, while lying off Gibraltar, together with some five or six others, to undertake a special mission for the captain. This he did, and having successfully accomplished it, was returning to his ship, when a squall seized the boat and overturned her, precipitating the whole party into the sea. Five of them were picked up alive, but Wilson and another man perished in the waves, their bodies not being regained until next day. But Wilson had lived the Christian's life, and for such there is hope in death. He, although for some time Ormond knew it not, was one more "garnered sheaf," gathered into the heavenly granary.

And now I must pause, for my tale is almost done. But in conclusion let me say that "Garnered Sheaves" will always abound where earnest faithful labour has abounded. Let it be laid down as an incontrovertible truth that no one can labour for Christ in vain. No matter how feeble may be the instrumentality, or how small the effort; if faithfully put forth it will bear good fruit. Many may doubtless linger round the vineyard, longing to do something; but, feeling painfully that their capacity for doing good is small, they shrink from attempting anything. This is wrong—culpably and blameably wrong. The highest commendation in the world is, "*She hath done what she could.*" To an undecided Christian—one who is afraid to launch out into Christian work—this commendation will never be given. But when we think of the "glorious cloud of witnesses," bending lovingly and anxiously over our pathway, listening to hear if we speak a word for Jesus—looking to see if we do a deed for Jesus—and when we remember that in the picture of the last judgment which Jesus gives us, the sole ground for the condemnation pronounced by the Son of

Man was the *not doing* anything for him, we should pause very solemnly before deciding that we can do nothing in his cause. With steady, it may be rapid steps, the long, dark night of Death is hastening on; and in that hour when we come to lie down and die, the great questions which will press upon our consideration will be—not, how much of earthly gain we have accumulated—not, how deeply we have drained the cup of pleasure—but, whether we have redeemed the time, how much we have done for God, and souls. And how dismal will be the retrospect if we have *done nothing*; if, instead of “coming again, bringing our sheaves with us,” we have only the recollection of lost opportunities, and wasted, buried talents!

THE END.



